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ROY BLOUNT JR.'S CROSSWORD

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PAUL RUDNICK ON MISSING MOMS

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SPY

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All you need is a deck of cards, a simple-minded friend, and a Touch-Tone™ phone. WARNING: make sure you read all of the instructions on page 29 before attempting to do the actual trick on page 44.

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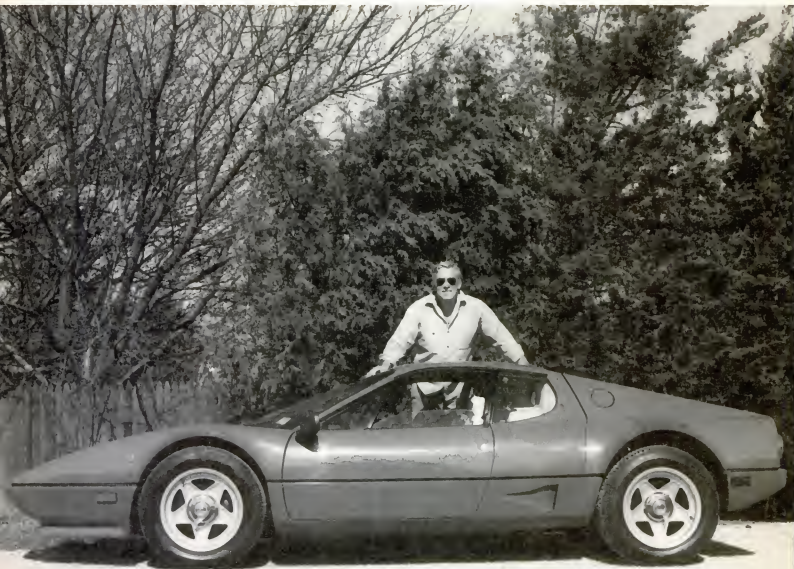
OCTOBER 1986

NEW, IMPROVED NEW YORK

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THE DESIGNER AND THE BOXER

We photographed fashion designer John Weitz . . . and his Boxer. The "Boxer," of course, is a twelve cylinder Ferrari "Boxer" BB512i, one of the most dazzling automobiles ever designed and one of the fastest.

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This One



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In October, *Reckless Disregard*



IN OCTOBER, *RECKLESS DISREGARD*, RENATA ADLER'S TWITTY, TENDENTIOUS REHASH OF TWO LIBEL TRIALS—*SHARON V. TIME* AND *WESTMORELAND V. CBS*—WAS TO HAVE

been published by Knopf. No one would have read it. Now publication has been postponed until next month. No one will read it. (Earlier this year, a version of the book was published as a two-part article in *The New Yorker*. No one read it then, either, except certain employees of Time Inc. and CBS, their spouses and assignees.) Adler suggests that journalists are untrustworthy, arrogant and dumb. She is wrong. Most journalists may be arrogant and untrustworthy, or untrustworthy and dumb, or arrogant and dumb. But all three at once? Geraldo Rivera, okay, but who else?



Legally, the dead cannot be libeled. For instance, all the ugly truths concerning Roy Cohn, the late thief, may now be asserted without fear of legal re-

prisal. The New York State Senate would change that. It has unanimously passed a bill that would enable survivors of the defamed to file libel suits on behalf of the dead. The sponsors of the bill were a pair of Queens Democrats; an obvious beneficiary of such a law would be the family of Donald Manes, the late hara-kiri buff and Queens Democrat.

Without any new corruption charges to excite readers and viewers, the New York media have spent the last month or two running stories about a cocaine epidemic. Crack stories, like crack, provide a cheap, novel thrill. The new word is fun to say—*crack!*—and the mild sense of crisis provided a diversion well past Labor Day. A Coast Guard armada blockaded New York Harbor; no contraband





was found. The Coast Guard officer in charge explained, "When the big man says it's time to implement and time to accentuate, we accentuate." But what about implement? *He left out implement.* The big man, President Reagan, wanted implementation as well as accentuation.

After a 13-year-old girl turned in her alleged cokehead mom and dad to police, a TV producer said she thought it would be really, really super if "we could have a happy ending." A happy ending like say, William Rehnquist's, the former sleeping-pill addict, who will preside as chief justice when the Supreme Court begins its new term this month.

Inventors of new products seem to lack the requisite ration of antidrug fervor. How otherwise to explain the new soft drink called Jolt Cola? "All the sugar and twice the caffeine," goes the Jolt slogan. "Sure to give you a boost every time you drink it." And in the backwash of Yves St. Laurent's campaign for a perfume called Opium, what moves Christian Dior to sell a new fragrance called Poison? Being fairly canny marketers ourselves, we're tempted to give the boys over in Manufacturing & Sales the go-ahead for the SPY fragrance line: Nightmare ("Nightmare—the scream in the

middle of the night") for women, and Crack for Men.

Up in Cambridge, Harvard's 350th anniversary, celebrated last month with the relentless self-satisfaction in which the university excels, turned out to be a Lady Liberty gala with no Neil Diamond. The event cost more than \$1 million. Here in New York, John Dyson, a mean-spirited lollipop-stick and trailer-hitch magnate, was spending a fifth of his fortune to lose the nomination for the U.S. Senate.

Andrew Wyeth spent hardly anything and got the most intense burst of publicity of all. No wonder, with blabbering Betsy Wyeth on the job, who for headlines' sake let the world believe her husband had been unfaithful. Such a wife! "He's a man who loves to play a very dangerous game with life. A very, very dangerous man."

Very, very dangerous? Mrs. Wyeth sounds like George Shultz talking about Colonel Qaddafi. And Qaddafi, again on the verge of being squashed by the United States, sounds (and looks) like a crack addict, or an embittered USFL franchisee in south Florida, or a Mediterranean Max Headroom. And we sound like we have just run out of month. ☺



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A NEW HOCKNEY EVERY 1.2 SECONDS

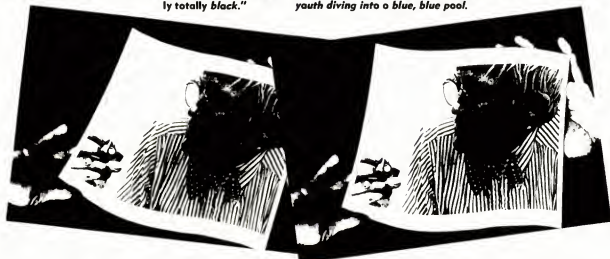
THE ARTIST DAVID HOCKNEY LIVES IN A COLORFUL house high in the Hollywood Hills. Recently I visited him there in the company of a mutual friend. Looking boyish and slightly vacant, he greeted us enthusiastically and ushered us into his studio. He pointed to a nearly identical pair of block-and-white still lifes and asked, "What medium do you think that is?" My friend suggested they might be woodcuts. The artist paused theatrically. "It's Xerox," he said.

Hockney is particularly excited about the blackness achieved by photocopying. "You see that block there," he said. "It's not reflective at all. It's not like ink or point, there's no oil or water in it. So it's totally black. Completely totally black."

After showing us a group of six smaller Xeroxed pictures taped together in a "Picaso frame" ("Picaso made that frame?" my friend asked. "No, there's a Picaso painting underneath," said Hockney) to form one larger work, Hockney revealed a major limitation of the process. "I can only work in two sizes," he told us, "letter and legal." —B.K.

How to Make Art

For those interested in duplicating the Hockney technique (an company time, perhaps), all you have to do is cut out some shops from fabric or paper (or that old standby: your own hand) and arrange them on a sheet of white paper. Then start copying, replacing the original with successive copies until the blocks have achieved complete, total, Hockneyesque blackness. Next run off 50 copies of that copy and circulate them among your friends. While they will not be genuine Hockneys, they will probably be more presentable than your amateur rendering of a lithe youth diving into a blue, blue pool.



THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF FINE DINING, PART I

Each Sunday in the *Times*, tucked below a story about water use concerns somewhere in the Northeast, the week's restaurant health code violations appear. They are broken into three categories: (Careless) Violations, Closed and Reopened. If a restaurant fails an inspection, the Department of Health gives it one chance to correct its violations before citing it. An inspector returns four to six weeks later, and only if the restaurant fails that inspection does it make the *Times*. If a restaurant fails a third inspection, it is closed. Here, then, are relatively more complete explanations of some violations that have recently appeared in the *Times*. (A note: the restaurant violations listed here represent conditions at the time of the inspection, not those that diners will necessarily find now.)

THE LONE STAR CAFE

61 Fifth Avenue
The Health Department found that a can opener was "encrusted with old food" and that the floors in the basement and kitchen areas were "laden with dirt, dust and old food." There was stagnant water on the basement floor, creating "conditions conducive to vermin." In addition, the Lone Star was cited for storing rump cuts and other items on the floor, an oversight also deemed conducive to vermin, and the inspector found mouse droppings where kegs of beer were stored. At the reopening, half these conditions had been remedied, but a new problem was discovered: floor, which ought to have been stored in a sealed proof container, was still in a paper bag. And it had been eaten into.



METROPOLIS

444 Columbus Avenue
The restaurant was storing old equipment on the floor and was discovered to have holes in the walls, providing "harborage spaces for rodents." The inspector also found "fresh mouse excreta." A second inspection revealed no improvement and two new problems: the sides of the grill and deep fryer were "grease laden and encrusted with old food," and the cleanliness of bar glass was inadequate.



THE KNUCKLEBROOKER CLUB

2 East 62nd Street
Inspectors cited the Knuckelbrocker Club for storing unopened food in the walk-in refrigerator, for having a dirty can opener and for having "floors under and around equipment in kitchen encrusted with old food and littered with debris." There were also mouse excreta, fresh and old, in the basement.



(continued)

POWER 'N' THINGS: MARKDOWNS AT THE MARCOS AUCTION

By Marilyn Suzanne Miller

THE BUYERS WERE A dozzling mess of types: wealthy Filipinos, serious antique dealers, Long Island decorators and representatives of the Hard Rock Cafe, all brought together for a single, shining evening of bidding up George III marquetry side tables and Sanyo under-counter refrigerators. For two days late last summer, a portion of the estate of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos was auctioned off by the Philippine Commission for Good Government (PCGG) at the Viscount Hotel at JFK airport. The commission had also devised the catalog legend—

The Marcos Estate: Auction the Past to Serve the Future, which, I guess, is one way of looking at the past.

Of the 800 lots on sale, fewer than a third were antiques. The rest were silk flower arrangements, upwards of 100 artificial trees, lacquered-bamboo furniture, monogrammed silk sheets (unused), the sound equipment from the Morcoses' East 66th Street townhouse disco (including a sing-along machine with original tapes by George Hamilton), as well as hundreds of brass service plates and, in presentation gift boxes, small

seashells glued into shopes resembling plants. The Morcos regime's gift containers of choice: boxes that looked like presents o king on a soap opera would give someone else on a soap opera, wrapped in presidential ribbons and seals so generic they seemed not unlike the gold stars third graders paste on homework and their foreheads. Imelda's predilection for artificial trees and flowers was neglected by the press; can there be any reasonable explanation of what the first lady did with all those artificial trees? Thus the vastly surreal effect, the aftermath of violent political upheaval in the age of the American Express card: might versus right with a little bargain-hunting thrown in, a revolution that requires ID if you want to pay by

check. The auto-satirical quality (a needy foreign government selling off the personal effects of its deposed leader in South Ozone Park, Queens, in what amounted to the world's largest living yard sale) was unparalleled.

The auction was conducted not by Sotheby's or Christie's, but by Sunrise Galleries, a small Long Island firm. A blue-chip firm probably would have broken up the estate, according to the Philippine government's art adviser, Kenneth Linsner. (Linsner's most intriguing professional activity is advising the U.S. Department of the Treasury about the value of criminals' possessions, so that when the T-men rush in to seize assets, he presumably is to be found on the scene, yelling things like "No, not that



YES SIR MR. MURDOCH, SIR

Who isn't a little cowed by powerful men? Who among us can say he has never worked simply for the money?

But pity poor Tony Schwartz, the *New York* magazine contributing editor. First he collaborates with Donald Trump on a how-to book about negotiating. Not something to boast about, but within the realm of imaginable hackwork.

Now, however, in one remarkable stroke, a new benchmark of young professional shamelessness. Schwartz is writing the 1986 annual report for News America Publishing Inc., which owns *New York*, and which is owned by Rupert Murdoch. Schwartz's explanation was unapologetic and succinct. "I am," he told *Spy*, "a hired gun."

table—*that* table.") Sotheby's, he claims, would have been loath to auction "three cases (205 pounds) of Moloconong Poloce offer-dinner mints in foil wraps" (lot #344), or *Crown at Rest* (lot #327, on oil on canvas by an anonymous "Contemporary Artist").

The enterprise had a touchingly earnest, PTA-like quality. The PCGG has as its goal finding and repatriating the Marcoses' estimated \$20 billion worth of art and other property. Rather than looting and burning, the middle-class rebels have organized into search committees: Reol Estote, Art and Arts Works, Gold



ANOTHER THING, YOUR EMINENCE— WHAT ABOUT WHEN I PRESS THE "ABORT" BUTTON ON MY COMPUTER?

July 5, 1986
John Cardinal O'Connor
The Archdiocese of New York
1071 First Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Your Eminence:

I don't know if the Post letter I wrote you never reached you or whether your staff never reached you or what, but I hope you don't think I'm nagging you about this.

I have a problem with roaches in my home. I recently saw on television a commercial for Black Flag Roach Enders. The ad claims that Black Flag Roach Enders kills roaches on contact. I don't know exactly how it could do this, but that's what the ad says. I am well aware of the Church's teaching on birth control, but I am wondering if there is any problem with me using Black Flag Roach Enders.

Sincerely yours,

John Murdoch
John Murdoch

CARDINAL'S OFFICE
1071 First Avenue
New York, NY 10022

July 10, 1986

Dear Mr. Murdoch:

The mail is always a mysterious and unpredictable element in our lives, and so I hope you will not be unduly disturbed if the first note you mentioned last week, unanswered, never arrived.

But since your second one did arrive at my desk, let me assure you that there is no moral problem with your use of any roach product. We are concerned with your use of any roach product, as clean and regular as possible, and so possibly this product can be helpful to you.

I hope you are satisfied and relieved by this response.

Sincerely yours,

John Cardinal O'Connor
John Cardinal O'Connor
Secretary to the Cardinal

THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF HAIR, PART I



▲ Columnist Bob Greene in 1971 (extremely rare photo) and the latest model, 1985

and Other Precious Metals. When I visited the PCGG offices, they were eating take-out Chinese food and stenciling numbers on woven fans—bidders' paddles for the auction. Such is the funny little face of penny-pinchin' populism.

Despite the eclecticism of the collection (as one might call it if one were desperate), the objects were of a dominant stripe. Imelda had indulged o profoundly middle-class sense of splendor: before the auction, with a vast amount of truly valuable items on display, what disappeared? The Louis Vuitton luggage. One of the most publicized lots was the needlepointed discotheque pillows that Imelda had had specially made on Madison Avenue. The most photographed was

the one reading NOUVEAU RICHE IS BETTER THAN NO RICHE AT ALL. But by for the most compelling in the Curious Possession of a Head of State category was a pillow with a complete limerick stitched on: THERE'S AN OVERSEXED LADY NAMED WHYTE, WHO INSISTS ON A DOZEN A NIGHT, A FELLOW NAMED CHEDDAR, HAD THE BRASHNESS TO WED HER, AND HIS CHANCE OF SURVIVAL IS SLIGHT. How fetching. Another seemed prophetic: HE'S MY BOYFRIEND, HE'S MY LOVER, HE'S MY HUSBAND, HE'S MY FRIEND, BUT HE'S NOT MY RESPONSIBILITY.

I do not know who purchased the nine-by-five-foot portrait of Ferdinand Marcos (with water buffalo) looking off toward a glorious, distant, luminous future (\$7,000). But I know who bid on it—a guy in his

twenties who described himself as "someone from Ohio who wants to use it as a cord table."

The purchaser of the night bought its companion picture—*Portrait of Imelda Marcos: The Triumph of Beauty*. It is a glowing depiction of Imelda, nine feet tall, at once impenetrable and lovely, in a gown encrusted with pearls; an enormous, baroque diamond necklace; diamond brooches at the wrists and over orms; a blue pageant-winner's sash across her torso; and a silky, rose-colored cape draped around her shoulders, precisely in the manner of a superhero. This, clearly, is Imelda's Imelda, fairy princess and statesman combined, a grafting of Jeane Kirkpatrick with Snow White.

The Marcoses were

plainly caricatures of consumer madness, Imelda the world's ultimate JAP, with her 9,000 shoes (1,500 new pairs were discovered recently) and Italian rococo furniture bought from Sotheby's in bulk. But the auction, in the end, was a fine little cautionary tale. For Imelda (or, at least, Imelda Marcos: *The Triumph of Beauty*) now belongs to a man who was wearing a pretty nice Italian suit the night he made the winning bid (\$27,500), an American baby boomer who had nothing particular in mind for the picture except, maybe, to hang it in his bedroom—unless his wife got mad, he said, which seemed unlikely if she had not already got just a touchicked by his spending \$27,500 on it in the first place.

f
THE FINE PRINT

CAPTAIN MEMO'S

117 West 72nd Street

Captain Memo's dirty floors near a refrigerator and for storing items directly on the floor, the restaurant also had neglected to display a choking-prevention poster. The second inspection proved more damning. There were fresh and old mouse excreta on the floor of the liquor storage room and on the benches by the garbage can. Roaches, dead and living, were found in the kitchen and basement, and there were live flies in the kitchen and at the front bar.



PASTA & CHEESE INC.

1120 Third Avenue

Paperwork violations here: the store failed to have its previous inspection report on hand and to post a sign informing pregnant women that miscarriages can result from drinking alcohol. Inspectors also found holes in the wall of the basement and fresh and old mouse excreta in the basement. And there were no insect guards by the fresh bread at the service counter.



MANUFACTURER'S HANOVER TRUST CORPORATE CAFETERIA

410 West 13rd Street (ninth floor)

Although the employer cafeteria had fresh and old mouse excreta behind a refrigerator at the hamburger counter, most of the violations were food-related. Piles in the walk-in refrigerator were not covered, the ice cream freezer was littered with old ice cream and the chopping block at the hot dog stand contained "deep cuts and grooves which may cause cross-contamination of foods." At a second inspection, there were no insect guards protecting the baked goods.



PHOCCHIO RISTORANTE

168 East 81st Street

Phocchio had a small problem with roaches. In addition, fresh and old mouse droppings were found on the floor and shelves of the kitchen area. The health inspector noted that "the primary rodentile (closed bait stations) was not being used," and they deemed Phocchio's extermination practices "inadequate." They also found "restricted pest-control products" (cans of Vapona) stored on the premises; even its owner came to the attention of the inspector. On reinspection, there were no signs of rodents. But there were roaches.



(Source: New York City Department of Health)

(continued)

ACCORDING TO WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN LARRY SPEAKS, THE PRESIDENT WAS MERELY TRYING TO ENSURE THAT THE GARMENT WAS LYING COMPLETELY FLAT



We may disagree with the president, but heck, he sure does seem like a nice guy. He's a little forgetful and confused sometimes, sure, but there's no denying that he's the most untroubled man we've had in the White House in a generation. He may behave distantly toward his children, but, by golly, anybody can tell that he's like a love-struck kid around Nancy. He really adores that lady.

The conventional wisdom had always been good enough for us—until we came across an extraordinary account, in the Santa Maria (California) Times, by the Secret Service agent in charge of the protective detail at the Reagans' ranch. According to Roger Grunwald, a 26-year Secret Service veteran who has served the last six presidents, Reagan harbors a secret rage where his wife and her clothing are concerned.

One day during the 1980 campaign, Grunwald recalls, the Reagans had arrived at their Santa Ynez mountaintop ranch and were making trips back and forth between car and house, carrying in loads of clothes. The president-to-be accidentally dropped one of Nancy's coats. Instead of immediately picking the coat up, however, Reagan looked around and, satisfied that his wife wasn't watching, *deliberately stepped on it.* "He showed her who was the boss there," Grunwald said admiringly, "as long as she didn't know about it."

ON SECOND THOUGHT, WHY DON'T WE JUST STAY IN TONIGHT?

THE NEW MUSIC SEMINAR, AN ANNUAL SELF-HELP convention for music industry entrepreneurs, was held this year at the utterly unhip Marriott Marquis Hotel. The formal program consisted of four dozen different panels, with eight to ten experts per panel.

The "Nightclubbing" panel was more psychodrama than tutelage. It included owners, managers and hangers-on, among them ex-con Steve Rubell, who ran Studio 54 and now operates Polliodrum; fatgirl Dianne Brill ("What makes a club really fab? Sexuality. Heat in the room. Good hairdos"); and Phillip Salon, the long-haired gnome who runs London's Mudd Club, and who, on this day, was wearing a floor-length cape of furry synthetic and a huge, nearly three-foot-tall and foot-and-a-half-wide top hat, made of what appeared to be red carpet remnants and crowned with a gold hommer and sickle. The panel was moderated, so to speak, by Rudolf, who ran Danceterio and now plans parties for Palladium.

Rubell and some of the others engaged in a maudlin round of mutual admiration and theorized about whether it was music or lights or architecture that attracted customers. Salon butted in.

"People basically go to a club to pull each other [have sex with each other]," he said. "Such a load of hypocrisy! There's all this snobbishness like, 'Oh, we don't let in New Jersey people.' I've never heard so many snobbish comments."

Rubell suggested, "Have you ever been to New Jersey?" "Well I'm not a fucking snob like you," said Salon. "I

didn't pretend to forget me when I walked in."

"I didn't know you," Rubell said.

"You fucking did." Salon addressed the audience: "Lost time I saw him [Rubell] I was with a pop star called Boy George. This time I won't with him so he pretended to forget me."

"Well do you blame me for avoiding Boy George now?" said Rubell.

"Fuck you," screamed Salon. "Is he not high enough up the social ladder? You're a fucking snob. Bollocks to you." Rubell said, "He's an asshole who stuck me with a hotel bill."

"You fucking crept round him last year and this year you treat him like shit," said Salon.

"You know why I treat him like shit?" Rubell asked.

"Because he's not high enough up the social ladder. Because that's what you're into. You're a fucking snob," answered Salon. "Now you're trying to get street credibility again. I was in prison last year. Oh, aren't I fucking liberated. You're just a patronizing wonker."

"You're a pretentious fool," said Rubell.


"I'm not pretentious, you're pretentious."

"Fuck," said Rubell.

"You fucking ignored me because you're pretentious, because you're a fucking snob, and you slag off my friends because you're a fucking cunt," Salon shrieked.

Rubell later distinguished himself in remarks addressed directly to the audience. He offered practical advice about attracting investors. "There's lots of doctors, dentists and lawyers looking for a little glomour," he said. "So you find those suckers and get them to put up \$50,000 or \$200,000. Then all you've got to do is give them a free-drink cord." Rubell's most spectacularly odd advice concerned nightclub legerdemain. "If you're going to skim your money, don't tell anybody, and don't let anybody else know. Count it all yourself, and don't trust anybody." —J.M.

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f
THE FINE PRINT

(continued)

GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, PEOPLE WITH GUNS KILL PEOPLE

Approximately 70,000 New Yorkers, from Raymond Ash to Gregory Ziskind, are licensed to own guns. The Pistol Licensing Bureau of New York City allows residents four kinds of licenses—Carry, Premises Business, Premises/Residence and Target. Here are some New Yorkers with gun permits.

GARRY

(Enables someone who owns or works for a company that moves valuable items or cash to carry a gun only while moving the items or cash)

MARTIN AREND, former Channel 5 commentator

BROOK BENTON, artist who recorded "Risky Night in Georgia"

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR., *National Review* editor

JACK CAFFERTY, WNBC "newman" (the disrupter)

ALEXANDER FARKAS, Alexander's department store founder

RAOUL FELDER, attorney

URI GELLER, spokeswoman

MICHAEL KORDA, editor in chief, *Simon & Schuster*

MORTON MANES, Donald's brother

ELLIOT MINTZ, consultant and pal of Yoko Ono

MARIO PROCCACCINO, former Democratic mayoral candidate

ARTHUR O. SULZBERGER, publisher and chairman of the board of *The New York Times*

DONALD TRUMP, casino operator

PREMISE

(Gun is registered for use within a specific location only—home or business—and may not leave there)

MICHAEL KORDA, editor in chief, *Simon & Schuster*

TODD VOLPE, SoHo art gallery owner

ENOCH WILLIAMS, New York City councilman

TARGET

(Permit-holder can transport gun to a shooting range and fire it at the range; he or she may not move gun without making a stop at the range)

MICHAEL KORDA, editor in chief, *Simon & Schuster*

(continued)



SPY TRAVEL TIP: HOLY LAND U.S.A.

IT'S BEEN A LONG WEEK OF DIRTY DEALS and commandment-breaking. A weekend of movies, shopping and improper expense account meals might soothe the battered spirit. But what about that ineffable, gnawing guilt? Holy Land U.S.A., in Waterbury, Connecticut, offers a cleansing pilgrimage (albeit simulated) to the land of Palestine and a day trip free from the inconveniences caused by gun-happy terrorists.

Holy Land U.S.A. covers a hilltop above town. A sign near the gate says the place is closed but will reopen before Judgment Day. Of course, like the real Holy Land, it can never truly be closed. Park outside the gate, hop over the chain barrier and hike in. Usually Holy Land is deserted, except for a few local teenagers hopped up on nicotine and testosterone. Don't worry: you're a tourist on a spiritual journey, not a trespasser.



First stop is the giant red plastic HOLLYWOOD-style sign spelling out HOLY LAND U.S.A. Nearby, a tattered billboard promotes the Ten Commandments. Some of the letters have fallen off, like on a grind-house marquee—a mute, poignant symbol of the erosion of our values.

The rocky hillside is dotted with wispy vegetation and rusted hunks of scrap metal. At the top is a huge cross. Below it, along a zig-zagging path, are re-creations of Bible scenes, rendered in rubbish and concrete. There are rocks scribbled with proverbs and junk dioramas. A weedy chicken coop represents the Garden of Eden.

Statues pocked with holes from pellet guns are missing arms, legs, even torsos—each a mute, poignant symbol of the erosion of our values. One headless Jesus stands ready to pose for photos—just place your own head above the Lord's neck. On the other side of the hill is a knee-high replica of Palestine in plaster and tinfoil. The tiny explanatory signs look like the price labels on *Let's Make a Deal*—another vivid, poignant symbol of the erosion of our values. —*Jack Barth*

Holy Land is two hours from New York. Take I-95 east to Route 8, north to Waterbury. It is on Slocum Street; the cross is visible from anywhere.

ROTTEN IN THE BIG APPLE



THE SKINHEADS ON AVENUE A HAVE JUST SPOTTED John Lydon peddling into a restaurant. "Ey, Rotten, you need a diet!" they shout. "Filthy sods," Lydon barks back.

One decade, as Johnny Rotten, he's God's retribution personified; the next he's a bloated careerist wanting a little heaven on earth. "I rather like the American way of life," says Lydon. (He lives on the water in Morino Del Rey.) Smartly suited in houndstooth, he says he despises New York because it's "grubby, and everybody behaves grubbily."

"Your next-door neighbor has no respect for ya," he says. "I'm not into offending people for the sheer hell of it." And the Sex Pistols were polite schoolboys? "I was merely stating my point of view."

The waiter brings stuffed scrod. "Roncid fish, must be that time of the month," Lydon says. "Oh, Johns," scolds Nora Maier Forster, in her mid-forties, with a sexy, throaty laugh. Love blossomed ten years ago when Lydon, then 20, threw paint on the walls of her apartment. Ever since, Nora, with her cruel model's face and extravagant sums of money, has been his mistress. Lydon's band, Public Image Ltd., is still making records, and Forster is a major stockholder of *Tagesspiegel*, West Berlin's newspaper of record.

"I love my Nora, and she loves me," Lydon says. "I don't like to be without her." By now he is ordering his screwdrivers two at a time. Nora doesn't drink at all, but she loves sugar. Sugar causes John to break out in nasty red spots. Fortunately, the two have much else in common: they love nature films; talk about stocks or four in the morning; obhor crime; and believe honesty is the best policy.

A fan sends over a round of drinks, and Lydon's guard snaps into place. "Are you sure this isn't a 'please-leave'?" he asks. The waiter assures the battered bay that it isn't. "That's nice," says Lydon, who'd just called everyone except Nora and himself "great herds of wildebeests." "I like when people are nice." —J.P.



f

THE INF PRINT

(continued)

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE TIP OF MANHATTAN

There have been nine cases of leprosy in New York City so far this year. In California, there have been 84.

THIS IS ENOUGH FOR BRIAN, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THE GROUP AND CREW? (THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF FINE DINING, PART II)

From a contract written for the Beach Boys for a performance in New York City:

[In the Beach Boys' Hospitality Room:] Food service is for fifteen people. Drinks must be iced down and all food ready 30 minutes before the Beach Boys' show. Please make as many of the items ORGANIC as possible. WE WANT FRESH QUALITY FOOD IN SMALL AMOUNTS. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS IS A SNACK, NOT A COMPLETE MEAL.

Beverages:
One whole watermelon (cantaloupe), with knife
Coffee urn, hot water for tea
2 one-quart bottles, organic apple juice
2 one-quart bottles, organic pineapple juice
2 one-quart bottles, fresh organic orange juice
1 case large bottle Perrier water
1 case bottled water (Crystal Geyser) (Caldwell) or (Evian)
1/2 case—Coke in bottle
1/2 case—Diet Pepsi in bottles
2 cases—long neck Budweiser
1 case—Guinness Stout
1 bottle Pinot Noir
1 fish soup/soup Vodka
1 case pack small bottles of tonic water
Plus: 1 quart fresh cream, small jar of honey, sugar, 1 lemon, limes, 2 can and bottle openers, Sweet 'N Low

For the crew:
Please note: in order to avoid the tedium of repetitious meals, and to provide a balanced diet, the purchaser will provide the hot meal for the day of the week of the engagement as listed.

Every day—3 gallons of milk, 2 cases of Budweiser, 2 cases of Heineken
Sunday—Steak, fresh salad, baked potato (cheese or sour cream), fresh hot rolls, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables
Monday—Fish dinner, rice pilaf, salad, soup, pie or cake, fresh vegetables
Tuesday—Barbequed or fried chicken, salad, green vegetable (fries), hot roll with butter, dessert
Wednesday—Lasagna or spaghetti and meatballs, 2 fresh vegetables, cream soup with cheese, 4 bottles red wine, dessert
Thursday—Prime rib, corn on the cob, baked potato, salad, fresh fruit, hot french bread, four bottles red wine, dessert
Friday—Mixed grill, steak, pork chops, lamb chops, salad, french fried potatoes, grain rolls, dessert
Saturday—Shrimp or crab Newburg, rice pilaf, salad, 2 fresh vegetables, 4 bottles white wine, dessert

Coffee and tea all day
—J.M.

(continued)



BEHIND EVERY GREAT MAN

the passing of foreign policy mandarin W. Averell Harriman last summer was well-timed, both in what might be called strategic terms—he was 94 years old, after all—and, more suggestively, in tactical terms: what but a shrewdly tactical sense of public relations could account for a death that came precisely in time to make the Saturday afternoon deadlines for front-page obituaries in the Sunday *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, and full-page obits in both *Newsweek* and *Time*? For the editors, the anxious deadline waiting game was made easier by a Harriman acolyte's assurances, in the days just before the end came, that the end would come in time to make all editions.

ATTENTION NEW YORKER READERS

a cartoon makes you laugh, but you have no way of singing the artist's praises properly. There's a Notes and Comment that doesn't concern nuclear holocaust or Nicaragua—right there, you see it—but there's no place for you to crow about it. You wish the magazine would let Elizabeth Drew write much, much longer pieces—and yet where can you make the case? You'd read an entire piece of *New Yorker* fiction, straight through, and you just want to tell the world. But you can't. The *New Yorker* has no Letters to the Editor column. Oh, sure—maybe after a writer has claimed that your famous restaurant served frozen turbot you get a hearing. But what if your name isn't Soltner? What if your name is Lizann, or Buzz?

We're here to help. SPY is offering space in this magazine—valuable space that could have gone to generous advertisers—for your letters to the editor of *The New Yorker*. Please address your correspondence to "Dear Mister Shawn," c/o SPY, The Puck Building, 295 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012.



THE LIZ SMITH TOTE BOARD

AN ACCOUNTING OF CELEBRITIES MENTIONED DURING JULY AND AUGUST

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Arsenic and Old Lace | 1 |
| Warren Beatty | 3 |
| Carl Bernstein | 4 |
| Boy George | 3 |
| Yul Brynner | 2 |
| Ellen Burstyn | 2 |
| Picardo Domingo | 3 |
| Dominick Dunne | 1 |
| Henry Kissinger | 3 |
| Swiftly Lazar | 4 |
| Kelly McGillis | 2 |
| Jack Nicholson | 9 |
| Prince | 4 |
| Nancy Reagan | 5 |
| Joan Rivers | 4 |
| Neil Simon | 2 |
| Frank Sinatra | 3 |
| Liz Smith | 4 |
| Susan Sontag | 1 |
| Aaron Spelling | 2 |
| SPY | 1 |
| Princess Stephanie | 2 |
| Meryl Streep | 7 |
| Vonno White | 1 |

Note: Harry Haun's columns, written while Liz Smith was on vacation, are not included in this tally.

The Illustrated History of New York, Part I

The Way We Were . . .



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MEET THE PRESS

a storyteller. I tell stories. That's it. I am not a commentator, although I have done commentary. I am a storyteller.

Can the people tell, do you think, between, uh, say, an anchorman who has integrity and someone who just reads copy?

Over the long term, I think they can.

Even when they're half asleep when they're watching?

Well, they're not always half asleep. There are some very serious broadcast, uh, news watchers out there.

Can you help people get free from dogma by telling them, uh, the way it is?

Um, yes, if they choose to be free from those conditions. It's wonderful to acknowledge that we are all, every human being on the planet and maybe every living creature on the planet, a part of a loving consciousness, um, that some call God, that the Eastern philosophies would call "all that is," uh, we're all part of that. And if we're all part of that, then we're all part of each other.

What is—that is dialectical materialism?

I have no idea. What... I mean, what... where are you going with this? I mean, what I don't understand... why? Your asking me what dialectical materialism is in relationship to my job as a local broadcast journalist in New York, uh, is like, uh, putting Oral Roberts in the Mayo Clinic.

What do you see as a problem in the world today?

Lack of love.

NOTE: Just three short weeks after this interview was conducted, Rolland Smith resigned from WCBS-TV News. Coincidence? Perhaps.



ROLLAND SMITH, 44. FORMER WCBS-TV NEWS ANCHORMAN

NAKED CITY contributors include Eric Kaplan, Billy Kimball, Jamie Molonowski, Jill Pearlman and Neil Scovell.

NO FURTHER QUESTIONS, YOUR HONOR

The following are real cases that have been tried in the past few years in New York courts.

U.S. v. 2,116 Boxes of Banded Beef Weighing Approximately 194,121 Pounds

U.S. v. One 1975 Honda "Thunderbolt" Two-Door Hatchback White in Color With Burnt Orange Vinyl Landau Top

U.S. v. One Solid Gold Object in Form of a Rooster

U.S. v. One Canon Containing 35mm Motion Picture Film Entitled *Truce at Fair*

U.S. v. U.S. Currency Amounting to the Sum of \$20,294, More or Less

U.S. v. One Hazardous Product Consisting of a "Red Bull" Energy Drink

U.S. v. 216 Bottles, More or Less, Sudden Change by Lanson Plut, Lab. Div. Hazel Bishop Inc.

U.S. v. 24 Bottles "Sterling Vinegar and Honey Aged in Wood Cider Blended with Finest Honey Contents" One Pair Product of Sterling Cider Co. Inc.

U.S. v. One Timorino Painting Entitled "The Holy Family With St. Catherine and Honored Donor"

United Brothers of Carpenters and Joiners of America, AFL-CIO v. Albany, Schenectady, Troy and Vicinity District Council of United Brothers of Carpenters and Joiners

Half of New York v. Levine-Barrato Associates Inc.

Christ v. New York City Transit Authority

Matter of Schmuck

U.S. v. Articles of Banned Hazardous Substances Consisting of 1010 Grams (More or Less) of Baby Rattles

Balazs v. Columbia University Press

Mars v. State Tax Commission

Various Tenants of 515 East 12th Street v. 515 East 12th Street

City of New York v. Unsafe Buildings

Py v. Anonymous

—N.S.



ERIC KAPLAN, 19. SPY CLUB REPORTER AND HARVARD COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGION MAJOR

Rolland Smith: You and I have something in common here. Because I am a student of comparative religions.

Eric Kaplan: Really? I believe... I mean, I've always been fascinated with, uh... man's set of conditions that he calls dogma. No matter what religion that is.

What do you mean by that? Uh, sometimes we can get hung up on dogma... uh, the conditions that we've agreed to agree upon... uh... and forget about the faith that goes with that... Are you taping this?

Yeah. What do you think of Marshall McLuhan's theory that there's a different type of consciousness that comes from absorbing information through television as opposed to the printed word?

Well, I'm not familiar with the total... uh, the totality of that theorem... Um, I think assimilation of information vis-à-vis television and/or radio, let's say—via broadcasting, is, uh, easier for the viewer to... to take because it requires minimal choice, whereas reading requires specific choice.

Well, how do you—as a newsman, I mean—I mean, how do you prepare yourself for your role—I mean, how do you combat the tendency to pander?

Uh, no, no. I don't pander. I think that the nature of the beast, this... this, uh, consciousness that you referred to vis-à-vis McLuhan, panders... I am nothing other than

OCTOBER DATEBOOK

- 2** The Dutch American West Indies Company Foundation's Peter Stuyvesant Ball; at the Vista International Hotel. This year's honoree is one-time alleged Lockheed-bribe-taker H.R.H. Prince Bernhard Leopold Frederik Everhard Julius Coert Karel Godfried Pieter of the Netherlands.
- 9** "Become a Notary Public." One-night course at the Sobelsohn School, 30th Street and Seventh Avenue; 6:00-9:00 p.m.; \$45. Learn to take affidavits and depositions; receive and acknowledge proof of deeds, mortgages and powers of attorney; and verify signatures.
- 14** The National Foundation for Facial Reconstruction holds its second-



ENCHANTING AND ALARMING EVENTS UPCOMING

- annual Palm Beach Ball at Sotheby's.
- 16** Full Moon Meditation at the Open Center, 83 Spring Street; 9:00 p.m.; free. All are welcome to join, "either physically or meditatively," to "link with countless others throughout the planet to radiate light and love."
- 16-19** New York State Beer Wholesalers Association Convention; at the Grand Hyatt.
- 23-24** Leather Industries Tannery Accessories and Garments Show; in the Rotunda at Madison Square Garden; free.

- 25** Dolphe Variety Show '86; Philippine comedy-variety show; at the Felt Forum; 8:00 p.m.; \$50, \$30 and \$20 tickets available.
- 25-29** Power Transmission Distributors Association Convention; at the New York Hilton.
- 26** Daylight saving time ends. The darkness deepens.
- 28-29** Approximately five days before the city's annual marathon (November 2 this year), the New York Road Runners Club devotes two nights to vandalism and photo

- opportunity by painting the race's trademark blue line through a series of once-tranquil neighborhoods. Free. All five boroughs. Fred Lebow is the one with the bullhorn.
- 28-November 1** American Association of Stratigraphic Palynologists Convention; at the Milford Plaza Hotel.
- 30** "CELEBRATE CHITA!"; at the Waldorf-Astoria; 7:00 p.m.; \$550 and \$350 tickets available. This "star-studded musical salute to Chita Rivera" will benefit Lenox Hill Hospital.

EVENING

7 NEWS; 60 min.
"S COMPANY—Comedy
Being tagged "reliable," Janet
develop a more fas
Somers

TV TO HART—Crime Drama: 60 min.
Models for a high-fashion magazine, in a murder case embroiled in a murder plot. Robert Wagner, Stefanie Powers.
BOSOM BUDDIES—Comedy
Scottie: Lois Chiles. Mac: Lionel Stander.
MAKE A BREAK!—Comedy
Curtis: Rue McClanahan) from Carl's roommate (Rue McClanahan) from Dolph Sweet.

vela; 60 min.
rotation

CLOSE UP
Proposed

Proposed Movie
Feb. Month

9 PM SPY 



GOING TOO FAR

GOING TOO FAR An all-star cast propels this contemporary morality tale about the life-styles of young, wealthy preppies who frequent the chic singles' bars of Manhattan's famed Upper East Side.

Based on *Actual Events*, *Mr. T* dramatizes the life of Jennifer, a beautiful young coed enrolled at an exclusive New England college, and how her tragic passion with handsome Robert ended with her tragic death in New York's Central Park. Jennifer: Meg Tilly; Robert: Matt Salinger. Jack the bartender (whose wife Carol [Paula Prentiss] owns the bar): Pat Harkin. Jennifer's uncle: William Atherton. Jared, the school ombudsman: Sam Waterston. (2 hrs.)

CRIME: A HIGH-TONED LOWDOWN

SUMMER CRIMES, LIKE summer romances, tend to be spontaneous and hot-blooded, but by the same token they are mostly facile, trivial, superficial. Of recent misdeeds, most prominent overall are those crimes ancillary to the crack phenomenon, the little wrinkle in the "lite" craze: *lite* psychosis, with its attendant *lite* murders and *lite* thefts. Our guardians of public morals have answered this fad with equally unfurling editorials, exposés, proclamations and one stunningly *lite* piece of undercover work, the slapstick mid-July crack-buylng spree by public servants. (See "The Ten Most Embarrassing New Yorkers," page 30.)

It is therefore not surprising that on apparently blond surface should cover a lively criminal trend to word parody and farce. While it is not always easy to distinguish between parody and mere copycatting, the roster of recent food-store tamperings is illuminating: most (apple juice, Crocker Jack, Scope mouthwash) were routinely imitative, but the Brooklyn Kool-Aid score, with its barely disguised allusions to Jonestown, was a parody. Recent months have seen a parody coup (the operetta-like cover in Suriname, in which seed

American speculators and would-be mercenaries planned to eliminate the upper tier of the Surinamese government during a business meeting), a clever crooked-cobbie parody (starring Eddie King, who allegedly crushed the Upper East Side and held up his fares at gunpoint) as well as the case of the Polish-born beauty in Queens who enslaved a pensioner for his bank account. Accounts of this lost drama read remarkably like a parody of allegations in the J. Seward Johnson will dispute, which likewise featured an expatriate Polish bombshell toying with the mind of a hopeless oldster.

But the richest vein of talent has been displayed by police, who have opened a grand season of burlesque. First to make the papers was Officer Orell Gaynor, assigned to the Queens Narcotics District, who went AWOL last July 25 and turned up two days later with a hair-raising tale. He had been kidnapped by two men and forced to ingest cocaine. Since the ingestion was effected by snorting and bosing, one can only wonder at the presumed tobe-low: did the bad guys use a blowgun? Less than a week later, Officers George R. Ferguson and Vincent J. Liguori, of

Brooklyn's 70th Precinct, are alleged to have visited a crack house and, in their understandable confusion, left with only the cash. Hours later, in apparent homage to the late Elvis, they returned to the building, to a different apartment, and shot the television set.

It is difficult to assess adequately the July 30 Monmouth shooting of a suspected drug dealer by a man claiming to be on FBI agent. The provocation seems to have been a "threatening gesture" and the response a single bullet, in the back of the head. One is certain that had the agent been properly equipped with a custard pie, he would have used that instead.

All this poles beside the late-July indictment of ten cops (including two chiefs) in the Boston suburbs. The official charge is stealing police exams, but this deal merely adorns an alleged ten-year oeuvre of bank robberies, large-scale drug dealing, even a possible proposed "seizure of governmental power." Only time and the eventual trial will tell, but this could prove the grandest jope of all. The only thing the spectacle lacks is the applause of its public. Such, however, are the travails of the criminal porodist: the thrill of agony, and the victory of defeat.

—LUC SANTE

T H E B L O T T E R

SPECTATOR SPORTS: OCTOBER'S PICK-HIT CRIMINAL TRIALS

The public is welcome to watch any of the following New York State Supreme Court trials, which will take place at 100 Centre Street in Manhattan. The court calendar and trial particulars are always subject to change, of course, so call the courthouse ((212) 374-5880) for details.

Carl Andre The minimalist sculptor is charged with murder; he allegedly shoved his wife, Ana Mendieta, from an apartment window. *Justice C. Berkman, Criminal Court, Part 66*

Andrew Crispo The art gallery owner, alleged to have participated in the "death mask" torture of Eigil Vest, the late Fashion Institute of Technology student, is to be tried on a charge of kidnapping someone else in an unrelated incident. *Justice J. Atlas, Part 39*

Stanley M. Friedman The Bronx Democratic leader and former law partner of the late Roy Cohn is charged with bribery, forgery, coercion and tampering with public records.

THE WILD KINGDOM

SPY's unofficial, highly selective account of incidents to which the New York City Police Department's Emergency Service Unit responded during the month ending August 15. Quotes are the police dispatchers'.

- ✓ East 4th St.—rat trapped in bathroom—“a *large rat*”
- ✓ Upper West Side—bat in an apartment
- ✓ New Lots Ave., Brooklyn—an “attack cat”
- ✓ Upper Second Ave.—“man with his foot stuck in the toilet”
- ✓ Brooklyn—snake that “left the scene” before officers arrived
- ✓ East 129th St.—dog needs tranquilizer so that police can search an apartment for spent rounds from a gun

I STAY AWAY FROM THE WATERFRONT

SPY's unofficial, highly selective account of incidents to which the New York Police Department's Harbor Unit responded during the same month.

- ✓ East River near Market Slip and South St.—corpse, or “floater”
- ✓ Hudson River near Gansevoort St. and Little West 12th St.—floater
- ✓ South Channel Bridge to Broad Channel Bridge, Queens—shots fired from private boat being pursued by second private boat
- ✓ Little Cricket Marina, Brooklyn—floater
- ✓ Harlem River, the Bronx—runaway stolen barge
- ✓ Bergen Yacht Club, Brooklyn—floater under dock

—Ann C. Mathers

"Jack Dorrian, who said his wife owns the bar, said that Mr. Chambers was such a regular at the bar . . ."—story, page B4, the August 29 *Times*

"Jack Dorrian, who said his wife, Carol, owned the bar, said that Miss Levin had been served no alcoholic drinks . . ."—another story, page B1, the August 29 *Times*

²⁰ "They come in here with . . . all sorts of identification," said Jack Dorrian, who said his wife, Carol, owned the bar—"a third story, page B3, the August 29 *Times*."

Photograph: top right, Star File



OUR CHEF JUST COMMITTED ESPIONAGE IN ITALY



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A SPY GUIDE TO

Things That Are Confusing

By Patty Marx

AFTER IRAN AND IRAQ WENT TO war against each other six years ago, you would have thought one of them would have had the courtesy to change its name so that people could keep track of which country was ahead. Needless to say, neither country did. Maybe Iran was hoping that confused mailmen would deliver arms intended for Iraq to Iran. Maybe Iraq liked having the name that was the preferred Scrabble choice. Maybe the forms were too hard to fill out. In any case, many smart, well-educated New Yorkers have trouble today knowing which is Iran and which is Iraq.

Both have oil; both hate the United States; both are predominantly Muslim; both prepare pita bread especially well; both are good places to go for an ornamental dagger or a tan. If they were people, their own mothers couldn't tell them apart.

There are differences, however. Most Iraqis are Arabs and speak Arabic. Most Iranians are Persian and speak Persian. Iraq was the cradle of civilization—Sumer, Akkad and Babylonia as well as part of the Fertile Crescent and the Garden of Eden were there. Iran is ostensibly where *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* took place. Iraq is where, I think it is safe to say, *Jeannie* on *I Dream of Jeannie* came from. Finally, Iran took the hostages and Iraq did not.

I remember it this way: I-racked my brains trying to remember where I'd put the cradle of civilization. Then I-ran into Jeannie, who said someone (but not a rabbit) had taken it hostage.

But your problems are not over. You may still humiliate yourself at a social gathering by confusing the following:



CONTRA/CONTADORA

A contra is a Nicaraguan antigovernment guerrilla, morally equivalent to our Founding Fathers. Contadora is the name of the alliance made up of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela that has been trying to negotiate a peace settlement with Nicaragua. Many people mistakenly call the Contadora the Contradora. The Contradora is an organization against Dora, if it is anything at all. Furthermore, Contadora has nothing to do with Contadina, which is a company that makes tomato paste and other fine tomato products.



SAKHAROV/SHCHARANSKY

The story of Soviet dissident Sakharov was dramatized on HBO in 1984. Soviet dissident Shcharansky's story has not yet appeared on television, although his biography was sold for a large sum to Random House.

FIRST COUSIN, TWICE REMOVED/ SECOND COUSIN, ONCE REMOVED

Your first cousin's grandchild is your first cousin, twice removed. Your parent's first cousin's grandchild is your second cousin, once removed. You are not responsible for any relative more distantly related than that.

BATHOS/PATHOS

Bathos is pathos after too many drinks.

HOWARD STEIN/HOWARD STERN/ HENRY STERN/HARRY STEIN

Respectively, a politician who used to own the discotheque Xenon, a disc jockey, the New York City Parks and Recreation commissioner and a writer who used to write the Ethics column in *Esquire*.



BROOKE ADAMS/KAREN ALLEN

Karen Allen looks less like Margot Kidder than Brooke Adams does. Also, unlike Karen Allen, Brooke Adams starred in *Almost You*, a movie directed by Adam Brooks.

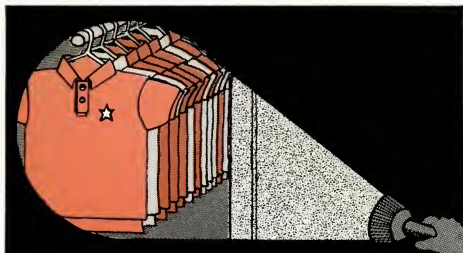
MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY/ MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

If you have to have one, choose multiple sclerosis, if only because it reduces your chances of ever posing for publicity photos with Jerry Lewis.



EURIPIDES/SOPHOCLES

Most important, Euripides wrote *Medea* and Sophocles wrote *Oedipus Rex*. If you're asked who's better, say, "Sophocles has the loftiness of Aeschylus plus the powerful psychological acuteness of Euripides." Whether Euripides and Sophocles are first names or last remains a mystery.



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PURITAN/PILGRIM

This is confusing because both have more than one meaning. Puritan is the name of a clothing company and a cooking oil. Pilgrim is the name of a glass manufacturer with a fancy showroom on Fifth Avenue and a French hand laundry on Second Avenue. Puritan and Pilgrim are distinct from Quaker, a breakfast cereal company, and Quaker State, a brand of motor oil.



M-14/M15/MIT/M-19/ MIG-21/M-1/M 104

Respectively, the U.S. combat rifle, the British intelligence service, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the leftist guerrilla group in Colombia, the Soviet jet fighter, the superhighway in England and the Broadway bus. It is possible, therefore, that one day on the M 104, a member of M15 who holds a degree from MIT and usually drives to work on the M-1 might sell a secret about the MIG-21 to a member of M-19 who carries an M-14. But not probable.

ORGANIC CHICKEN/ FREE-RANGE CHICKEN

An organic chicken is a chicken that has never eaten anything sprayed with pesticides. A free-range chicken is a chicken that is not cooped up but is allowed to roam freely and eat whatever it wants, including organic chicken.

SIDNEY LUMET/SYDNEY POLLACK

Sidney Lumet directed the movies you feel you ought to see but can never get around to seeing (*12 Angry Men*, *Fail Safe*, *The Pawnbroker*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*). Sydney Pollack directed the movies you never wanted to see but then saw on cable (*The Electric Horseman*, *Jeremiah Johnson*, *Absence of Malice*). Also, Sidney Lumet has never made a movie with Robert Redford; Sydney Pollack has made six.

IOWA/IDAHO

Sodomy is legal in Iowa but not in Idaho.

PENN/PENN STATE

People who go to Penn, short for the University of Pennsylvania, pay roughly \$10,000 more a year so that you will not confuse their school with Penn State.

US/USSR

One has "The World's Best Cup of Coffee," but I forget which. ☹

Sure, *he still gets paid thousands for a ten-minute doodle. And sure, merchandisers remain eager to slap his neuter cartoon people all over wristwatches and T-shirts. But does anybody take his work seriously nowadays?* TAD FRIEND shows why, for Keith Haring, it's all

Downhill From Here



KEITH HARING WAS, briefly, the public's idea of what an artist might be. In 1978, at the age of 20, Haring immigrated to New York from Kutztown, Pennsylvania, and within three or four years his Day-Glo glyphs made him famous. The young man who had dropped out of commercial art school in Pittsburgh and imagined himself a "shame" to his parents was suddenly named "the 'It' person" by Andy Warhol. He had unexpectedly entered a world where kitsch made stars and stars made kitsch, and where no one knew or particularly cared which was which, or what Brooke Shields meant when she said, "Keith is as nice as he is talented."

He seemed, always, a little sad: magazine photographers loved posing him in front of his work, his contour paintings of faceless heads framing his swiftly balding head, his haunted eyes staring from behind John Lennon glasses. Like a charmed town drunk, Haring attracted a ragged band of street kids who tagged along wherever he went, unashamed. He was rich and famous and everyone liked his work, or said they did.

Haring's precipitous ascent began one day almost six years ago at a 42nd Street subway station. Looking at one of the sheets of heavy black paper the MTA uses to cover expired ads, Haring was seized by inspiration. After going above ground to buy chalk, he sketched his first subway doodle—a flying saucer zapping a stylized dog. In the following months, bemused commuters saw Haring's epicene, endomorphic figures pop up like Kleenex all over the city, wherever the MTA had unwittingly left a canvas. He developed a "vocabulary" of characters that he still employs: barking dogs, running men, radiant babies, flying saucers and crude TV sets, with an occasional jolly phallus added to keep the others company.

The year brought Haring frequent police summonses for vandalism, then a breakout: Tony Shafrazi's gallery in SoHo took him on. Shafrazi was notoriously fond of



graffiti—in 1974 he scrawled the enigmatic message KILL LIES ALL across Picasso's *Guernica*—and he presented Haring as the herald of art's new agenda, whatever it might prove to be.

Shafrazi's promotions found a receptive market. Haring's zippy squiggles were widely lauded as "childlike," "innocent" and "joyous," and there was much critical pother about the metaphysics of his method (an extremely facile artist, he paints without preliminary sketches). Haring's background in semiotics at the School of Visual Arts—one course—was duly revered, and obeisances were made to the final concerns implicit in his juxtaposition of stunted human forms with threatening machines and nuclear pictographs.

Perhaps more significant, Haring painted Madonna's jacket and Grace Jones's body. If Haring heralded anything, it was a muddled symbiosis between the worlds of pop music and pop art. (His show at Club 57 in 1979 is credited as the first such synesthetic event.) Once Haring had a name, he enmeshed himself in the downtown club scene, where image was all and the artist was in fashion—or, better, fashion was artistic. Dressed in loose clothing and sneakers, Haring sluiced from party to



At the height of his fame, Haring zipped between Area and Palladium with a tight group of name artists—Jean-Michel Basquiat, Kenny Scharf and Andy Warhol; they formed, for the moment at least, a glittering Matte Pack.

party, traveling in a tight pack of young name artists—Jean-Michel Basquiat, Kenny Scharf—and the group's mentor, Andy Warhol. They played always to the paparazzi, and seemed to enjoy their foredoomed 15 minutes of celebrity—for the moment, at least, a glittering Matte Pack.

The apotheosis of this commingling of art, music and empty conversation—evidently of Haring's career—came in May 1985. That month the new Palladium opened, displaying the Matte Pack's handiwork, and Area featured artworks on its dance floor. Haring installed a pyramid-shaped wall at Area that showed a crowd worshipping a monkey on one side and a crowd grabbing for burning money on the other.

Haring's popularity would linger for a few more months, its embers fanned by the media. He was the sort of appealing figure who could design the city's "litter-pig" buttons while continuing to draw on its subway walls. He was fashionably antisocial and deeply socialized, and the press delighted in describing the polite fillips he aimed at a society that responded by pulling out its checkbook.

Yet two allegations pursued him, and the attacks grew strident once it seemed clear that he had no aspiration greater than securing a permanent place on the guest list at Area. The

first charge was venality, the second that he lacked real talent. Haring strewed Haring buttons and T-shirts wherever he went not out of generosity, it appeared, but out of a greedy insecurity similar to Peter Max's 20 years before.

When asked by Bloomingdale's to design a shopping bag in 1983, Haring said he wouldn't sell out and turned the offer down, but two years later he designed a shopping satchel for a store in Switzerland. His explanation did not settle the matter. Doing the bag in 1983, he said later, "would have been selling out."

Haring finally dropped all pretense of scruples and opened his Pop Shop last April. The Lafayette Street store vends to an eager public such Haringana as atomic-baby T-shirts (\$20) and inflatable baby pillows (\$12). A mail-order trade is planned.

If the closing of the art show at Area last year marked the beginning of Haring's speedy regress from the locomotive to the caboose of cool, the Pop Shop's inaugural surely marked its end. As Hilton Kramer, editor of *The New Criterion*, notes with satisfaction, "I haven't heard anyone refer to him in months."

But what precipitated Haring's eclipse was not so much the suspicion that he had prostituted his art, but that he had nothing to prostitute. The art critic Robert Hughes has it

right: "People will look back to Haring and say, 'So that's the kitsch people were buying. Good heavens!'" A product of television, Haring listed *The Flintstones* among his artistic influences, but *influence* is too mild a word: his nervous, automatic figures were merely an unmediated response to the sort of cartoon animation that featured Fred chasing Barney ceaselessly past the same potted palm.

During 1986 Haring's work retreated entirely into petulant self-parody, pseudoinnocence sourced: Disneyesque pictures of a money-mad Warhol in two Los Angeles galleries; a mural of crazed, carnal monsters at the San Francisco club DV8. For a moment, Haring appeared to have discovered something he wanted to say—his canvases addressed such subjects as racism and greed. But his glib, flip characterizations made the transplanted themes seem at best arrant and at worst silly. It was clear then that he had nothing more to sell.

Before he became well known, Haring worked as a busboy at Danceteria. At the height of his career, he played a witch in the gingerbread house at Area. It is a disquieting measure of both the forces that produced him and of his own self-circumscribing achievement that the two roles seem to us now indistinguishable. ☐

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Penn & Teller's All-Computerized Electronic Card

TRICK

Introduction: This is not good, clean fun. It is a tool for mocking others. There is nothing even slightly computerized about this trick. It is a cruel hoax in which you gain your victim's trust and then betray him/her. Enjoy.

10

**Steps for using
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to make your "friends"
look like dopes:**

1. Make sure you have a Touch-Tone™ telephone.
2. Get a deck of cards.
Take out the three of clubs and place it in an easily accessible pocket. We use the outer breast pocket of a suit jacket, but fit the trick to your own style of dress. (This trick has no dress code. Dress any way you like. It's one of the few rights you have left.)
3. Pick a "friend" you want to humiliate, and invite him/her over.
4. When your "friend" arrives, make sure that he/she has not beaten you to the punch by already reading this issue of SPY.
5. Hand him/her the magazine opened to page 44 (Penn & Teller's All-Computerized Electronic Card Trick). Do not let him/her see this page. Use your head.
6. Have your "friend" follow the directions on page 44. (Your "friend" thinks he/she is the one doing the trick.)
7. When your "friend" instructs you to turn your back to "look at the card in private," secretly switch the random card you actually picked for the three of clubs that is hidden in your pocket. (See Fig. 1.)

NOTE: While you are doing this, your "friend" will be dialing the phone number that is given on page 44. The voice on the other end (Penn's) will put your "friend" through an elaborate, pseudocomputerized rigmarole that will end up telling him/her what you already know—that you're holding the three of clubs. Cued by the tape on the telephone, your "friend" will ask you a series of questions.

8. When your "friend" asks, "Is it a black card?" say, "Yes," in the tone of "Big deal!"
9. When your "friend" asks, "Is it a club?" say, "Yes!" a little more impressed.
10. When your "friend" asks, "Is it the three of clubs?" say, "YES!" as if you've just seen Jesus, Mary, Joseph and Jimi.

● Act as though your "friend" is a genius, while secretly knowing he/she is a dunderhead. Prepare to laugh behind his/her back as soon as you're alone with your real friends—other SPY readers.



Extra added cruelties for real meanies:

1. Tell your "friend" not to waste his/her money buying a copy of SPY. Suggest that he/she just copy down the phone number and do the trick for his/her boss tomorrow at work.
2. Once you understand how this trick works, neatly rip out this page and the warning in the table of contents, and destroy them. We suggest burning; but *suam cuique*. That way you can leave the magazine out on your coffee table and never get caught.

THE

MOST EMBARRASSING NEW YORKERS

They move, they shake, they showboat. The rest of us cringe. And you wonder why America hates New York?

REX REED

WHEN PEOPLE SAY THAT STANDARDS OF rigor and good sense were abandoned in the late 1960s, they usually have Abbie Hoffman and "be-ins" in mind. But consider this: back in crazy 1968, Rex Reed was a respected figure in American letters whom *Time* called "the most entertaining new journalist in America since Tom Wolfe." *Rex Reed!*



That period was brief, fortunately: Reed quickly moved downscale to *The Gong Show* and the murky middle parts of *The New York Post*. Unfortunately, however, Reed also moved back to New York. Now nearly 50 and taking up space in the Dakota, he represents himself as the embodiment of waspish wit and show business urbanity.

Rex Reed ♥ New York, and that makes the rest of the country think

New York loves him.

Reed's epigrammatic put-downs are lame and arbitrary. Phrases meant to be mean are meaningless. For instance, he once called *Women's Wear Daily* "a pile of a publication" with "the sophistication of boiled peanuts." Praise is even more horrid—his positive reviews sound like the overblown testimonials of an unctuous Judy Garland fan after hoisting one too many *ky* royales at the piano bar. Rex Reed makes a living writing sentences in which nearly every word is ungrammatical, awkward or wrong.

GEORGE STEINBRENNER

THE HAIR—A SORT OF MOLDED ROTARIAN PRINCE Valiant cut—is almost enough by itself, but then you have his blue American-made clothes, stretched across his steakhouse belly so that you're afraid someone's going to lose an eye to a flying button, and then on top of that you've got the horrid, nonstop whining, got him chewing out Mattingly this spring and incessantly bitching about Winfield and workout attendances and hiring and firing managers like he's the Freddie Silverman of major league baseball, and you wonder if you can even name all his managers but you give it a try and you give up and then you think about how his awful, Watergate-felon manner has turned Yankee fans sour, and you're all set to do something about him when you realize that it's just too depressing for words, and you stay home and watch the Mets.



GERALDINE FERRARO

OKAY, GERALDINE FERRARO TRANSFORMED herself overnight from a Queens unknown into a U.S. vice presidential candidate. And yes, she belongs in the history books, paving the way as she did for other women to scale great political heights (only to be dragged down by the boring males who topped the ticket and by husbands with fuzzy 1040 forms). But why



can't Ferraro stay in the history books, instead of constantly springing out like a giant pop-up? After all, George Bush manages to stay out of the news—and he's a real vice president who actually won the election. But there Gerry is hawking her memoirs, in which she blames everyone but herself for a 49-state electoral rout. And there she was last winter, offering to temporarily step into the shoes of former Queens Borough President Donald Manes—anything to be president, if only of a county.

Even if Ferraro wanted to stay out of the news, the men in her life wouldn't let her. Despite his mother's amply advertised liking for Pepsi, John Zaccaro Jr. seems to prefer coke, according to Vermont police. And what would a grand jury in Queens be without at least a mention of John Zaccaro? His name surfaced recently in reports of an investigation of illegal payoffs by cable TV companies to Queens politicians.

LEONA HELMSLEY

Dear Leona :

I'm so pleased that you find the letters I print with every ad for my hotel cross, self-serving and obsequious. Here at the Helmsley, we pride ourselves on taking care of the little things—like me, for example. And whenever you stay at a Harley hotel (*Har for Harry, Ley for me*—isn't it darling?), you can always be sure of a bed fit for a queen—like me, for example. From our velveteen prose to our zircon tiaras, we like to think we're giving out-of-towners the kind of high-class experience they'll never find at home—like me, for example. That's why you'll always find a picture of me just across from William Safire's column in the *Sunday Times Magazine*—like the one right opposite his discussion of the word vulgar on August 24, for example.

To answer your question, I guess I did have an unusual rise to the top. Once I was just little old Leona Mindy Roberts Rensenthal, another receptionist at a real estate firm. The next thing you know, I married Harry Helmsley, just about the richest man in New York.

At the Helmsley, one thing always comes first: you.

Leona Helmsley



GRACE JONES

LONG BEFORE

anyone suspected she was anything other than a very large black woman, Grace Jones knew she was the greatest. "I'm bold! I'm a revolutionary!" That was back in 1977. In those days she was merely a high-strung model taking her first steps into the short-lived limelight of disco music. Disco died, but like a loud, uninvited guest, Grace stayed on, gabbing remorselessly, mostly about herself, until the only impression remaining is that of a towering blur of indistinct sexuality peddling dirty pictures of herself.



ANDY STEIN

YOU SAY HE'S TOO EASY TO RUN DOWN. You say everybody knows he's a cartoon of the greedy public ego, a kind of health-club-circuit golem. You say he is already plenty despised, that sensible New Yorkers react viscerally to Stein as they would to a bad smell.

You must remember, however, that City Council President Andy Stein proposes to be *president of the United States*. Imagine even a New York mayor or U.S. senator whose alma mater is Southampton College; whose only paying job outside politics was being water boy for the Baltimore Colts; who feels obliged to tell reporters, "I am not dumb."

He is still among us, always smiling that desperate, straining smile. Despite the fake last name and the fake hair, he continues to win one showy, no-show political office after another. There are now voters who weren't yet *born* when Stein, at age 23, changed his name ("Finkelstein was just too unwieldy") and had his father pay enough (about \$35 per voter in today's dollars) to win him an Assembly seat on the East Side—enough money, the candidate himself said, "to make someone throw up." The man knows he's repulsive, and *says so*.

His politics are easy-listening liberal. The issue he has harped on since 1975 is substandard nursing homes. Fearless Andy Stein. More recently he has come out strongly, unequivocally against abusing children. Courageous Andy Stein.

Not everybody thinks Stein is a nincompoop, of course. The indicted Bronx Democratic leader Stanley Friedman, for example, has called him "bright [and] hard-nosed [with] a nose for the issues."

MIDGE DECTER

MRS. NORMAN PODHORETZ HAS MADE A NAME BY flip-flopping her politics, but beneath the neoconservative glaze lies a socialist manner still. The shrill, accusatory hissing and sputtering at her ex-friends is venom of the same vintage once sprayed in sectarian left-right infighting. Not only was Decter active among the socialists until the mid-1970s, she was also once a prominent figure in the insular Eastern liberal media elite she now denounces.

These days, from her station as Executive Director of the Committee for the Free World, Decter struts and squabbles in editorial columns and letters pages with old friends who compete with her year after year to snag the triple garlands of New York intellectual life—Most Obnoxious, Most Petty and Most Humorous.



ALFONSE D'AMATO

IT ISN'T IMPOR- tant that New York's junior senator is short and weaselly-looking, that he speaks like a man with a tongue shot full of Novocain. What matters is his record.

1937, born
1940s, boyhood nickname: Tippy, after a family dog
1960s and '70s, political mentor: Joseph M. Margiotta, the former Long Island GOP boss convicted of extortion
1970s, highest political office before election to the Senate: town supervisor, Hempstead, New York
1982, on entering the Senate: "They thought I was going to be a raving fool."

1986, on Senate committee hearings: "If you don't go, they nail you, they take attendance."

Typical \$500 campaign donor: Dennis Levine

Standard greeting: "Hi, babes."

Standard farewell: "Okay, I love ya, babes."

BARBARA HOWAR

SHE WAS ONCE TAKEN AL- most seriously, in the late 1960s and early '70s. But the years, the exposure and the permanent tan have all taken their toll. Barbara Howar is now a ludicrous woman, really—each night she primps and postures before millions, delivering mindless accounts of trivial movements in the lives of inconsequential stars. Over 47—she won't be more specific about her age—Howar dresses like a Galleria-bound 15-year-old, all spangles and cavalier boots. A number of stories over the past couple of years have described how both Random House and Simon & Schuster rejected the manuscript of her novel, *Setting Things Straight*, and how she had to return her advances. A Washington fixture dating back to the Johnson administration, Howar is a female Jack Valenti—smarmy, well connected and famous for having once been moderately famous. She was cohort with Dan Rather of *Who's Who*, a foiled *People*-like magazine show on CBS, and has been a Hamptons habitué ever since Jim Bellows brought her to New York to become Entertainment Tonight's celebrity epiphyte. She probably thinks she has it all.



DONALD TRUMP

FORGET THE WAY he has imposed upon all of us his idea of "class"—more a *Dynasty* notion of panache than anything even faintly evoking the uptown swagger that New York epitomizes. Forget his noxious tactics with tenants he wishes to evict. Forget the sheer cheesiness of Trump Tower, Trump Plaza and his casinos; forget the way he seems to have the *Times* in his back pocket; forget the hustler-on-his-best-behavior manner. In fact, forget just about everything concerning Donald Trump except the stupid things he says:



"It would take an hour and a half to learn everything there is to learn about missiles. . . I think I know most of it anyway." —On his desire to handle nuclear-non-proliferation negotiations for the United States

"They weren't even sculptures. They were stones with some engraving on them. They were nothing. Just junk." —His rationale for destroying Ely Jacques Kahn's art moderne frieze on the front of the old Bonwit Teller building

"Electricians make a hundred and some odd dollars an hour. The concrete people just make fortunes. Laborers make hundreds of thousands of dollars a year."

"It's the greatest group of stores [the shops in Trump Tower] ever assembled under one roof. Well, it's probably the most expensive set of stores, certainly. And the

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32 W. C. Costanzo—*soldato*, *Elizabeth St.*
33 F. L. Capone—*soldato*, *FDR Dr.*
34 E. DeCurtis—*soldato*, *W. Houston St.*
35 A. Delانو—*soldato*, *Mulberry St.*
36 C. Delانو—*soldato*, *E. Houston St.*
37 P. F. Fazio—*soldato*, *E. 14th St.*
38 G. Fazio—*soldato*, *E. 14th St.*



42. L. Rummer—older, Ave. A
43. S. Rummer—older, Ave. A
44. J. Scaccia—older, E. 2nd St.
45. A. Spallone—older, E. 14th St.
46. J. Spallone—older, W. 12th St.
47. G. Filippone—aps, Monroe St.
48. V. Gigante—aps, Sullivan St.
49. V. Napoli—aps, E. 11th St.
50. A. Nardi—older, East 21st St.
51. J. Nardi—older, East 21st St.
52. F. Cagione—older, E. 7th St.
53. E. Cagione—older, Sullivan St.
54. F. Cuccia—older, Riverside Dr.
55. J. DeNino—older, E. 14th St.
56. C. DiLoreo—older, Madison St.
57. C. DiLoreo—older, Madison St.
58. S. Gencarelli—older, E. Broadway
59. B. Gigante—older, missing from W. 14th St.
60. B. Gigante—older, Broadway St.
61. J. Mada—older, Monroe St.
62. A. Mada—older, Madison St.
63. A. Mada—older, Madison St.
64. J. M. Randazzo—older, W. 41st St.
65. V. C. Rao—older, E. 14th St.
66. S. Russo—older, W. 14th St.
67. A. Sideris—older, E. 24th St.
68. A. Sideris—older, E. 24th St.
69. E. Sideris—older, W. 14th St.
70. B. Stacciaroli—older, Thompson St.
71. J. Stacciaroli—older, E. 14th St.
72. J. A. Stacciaroli—older, E. 14th St.
73. J. Tellechi—older, Madison St.
74. J. Tellechi—older, Madison St.
75. E. C. Uvold—older, Madison St.
76. A. J. Velasco—older, E. 11th St.
77. E. Vignone—older, E. Broadway
78. N. Marzangeli—older, E. 14th St.
79. N. Marzangeli—older, E. 14th St.
80. N. Marzangeli—older, E. 14th St.
81. A. Marzangeli—older, E. 14th St.
82. J. Campanelli—older, Mad St.
83. J. Campanelli—older, Mad St.
84. J. Campanelli—older, Mad St.
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96. J. Campanelli—older, Mad St.
97. C. S. Calton—older, Park Ave. N.
98. A. J. D'Amico—older, E. 24th St.
99. C. D'Amico—older, E. 24th St.
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Ann C. Mathers

HOW COME NEW YORKERS DON'T HABLA ESPAÑOL SO GOOD?

*Even after years of reading
ads in the subway cars, you
still can't quite make out
street Spanish? Don't
worry—neither can*

*Spaniards or Colombians or
Peruvians, thanks to decades
of colonial mongrelizing in
Puerto Rico and Manhattan.*

MICHAEL HODGES

*figures it all out, and warns:
don't let anybody vaccinate
your file folder.*

HOW BAD IS NEW YORK SPANISH? SPY asked a Puerto Rican friend over drinks. She didn't flinch. "It sucks," she said, drawing on her cigarette and turning back to the Mets on TV.

Her pronunciation had the ring of authority. The truth is that "Spanglish" ("Espanglish," for Hispanic readers), the not-quite-Spanish, surely not English hybrid that dominates the city's Latino neighborhoods, is apt to baffle the Hispanic from outside New York City or Puerto Rico. Lacking a Spanglish phrase book, a Peruvian on a recent visit was bewildered when the chambermaid at his New York hotel announced, "*Voy a vacunar la carpeta*." Meaning, in Spanglish: "I'm going to vacuum the carpet." Meaning, in real Spanish: "I'm going to vaccinate the file folder."

New language or mutant offspring? There is more to Hispanic New York, of course, than Puerto Rico; the city now has large immigrant communities from almost every Spanish-speaking country. Yet it is the Puerto Ricans, by virtue of their sheer numbers and long presence (and, perhaps, their U.S. citizenship), who have most distinctly colored the local idiom. And Spanish speakers from elsewhere seem to disapprove unanimately.

None were more unaccommodating than a visiting professor from Spain, a speaker of perfect Ur-Spanish. At a bar near Columbia University, he talked in the elegant, self-conscious fashion of his Castilian dialect, all *z*'s and soft *c*'s blurring into a lisp. He said he wasn't "prethisely" sure what the "Newyorican" speaks, but he emphatically denied that it was Spanish as he knew it. "Mind you," he insisted, leaning forward, "I am no elititht. The Newyorican can speak whatever he wantth—Bantu or Dutch, for all I care. Just leave me out."

Among the city's Spanish-speaking consular staffs, even the muffling effects of diplomatese couldn't quite cover the sound of axes grinding. The cultural attaché at the Spanish consulate struggled between candor and caution: other Hispanics would find the Newyorican dialect "intelligible," he said, "but not much more." The Colombian consulate aimed for the kneecaps. Colombians have appointed themselves the New World custodians of the language, and they are relentless about asserting their title. The Newyoricans, the Colombian says, "have completely forgotten grammar and linguistic rules." The dialect "has become completely polluted, and I don't think it's going to improve."

Spanglish was inevitable from the moment U.S. troops waded ashore in Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War, and some of the best mongrelisms date from those early years of contact. Personal favorites: *zafacón*, universal term on the island—and nowhere else—for “wastebasket,” derived from the bureaucratic injunction *SAVE CAN* stamped on all barrels used by U.S. military occupiers. Similarly, in the generation that followed the introduction of the U.S. Postal Service throughout Puerto Rico the common boy’s name Ismael began to pop up in baptismal records as Usmail.

Or consider the origins of *miquear*, a Newyorian verb meaning “to take it easy.” A distinguished panel of Columbia University scholars (two Puerto Ricans, one Newyorian and one Cuban), well marinated in rum and Cokes, debated this puzzle at length one recent evening. Their unanimous verdict? Etymology by way of Walt Disney, to wit: “Introduction to Geology sure is a ‘Mickey Mouse’ course.” (In all fairness, however, Spanglish is not the only tongue to disgrace itself in this fashion; “to flip out” has appeared in German as *aufgippen*.)

Most English-speaking New Yorkers are familiar with at least the rudiments of Spanish thanks to their twice-daily penance on the city’s subways. One seeks escape from a bestial environment in almost anything, and “subway engineer” Armando Vargas’s advertising paean to Preparation H (“*Las hemorroides me hacían sentir muy mal hasta que usé Preparation H*”) works nicely.

Official subway Spanish is a colorless, bureaucratic idiom (“*La vía del tren subterráneo es peligrosa*”), a literal and graceless translation by some MTA hack. This sort of boilerplate is intelligible to Anglos because of its extreme literalism. Spanglish, exclusively a spoken dialect, reveals its sweaty, slangy derivations to the ear, not the eye.

What are those nice boys doing—sucking tokens out of the turnstile? No, just *jagueando* (pronounced hang-goo-ay-AHN-doe), “hanging out.” And now what are they doing to the change box with that crowbar? Nothing, just *gufendo* (goo-fay-AHN-doe), or “goofing around.” And the token clerk who just ran screaming from his booth? Apparently he’s *friqueandose* (free-kay-AHN-doe)—“freaking out.”

Then there is the accent. Mechanically, its definition is simple. Like most speakers of Caribbean dialects, the Newyorian drops his *s*’s and *d*’s and

chews the middle of his words, so that the first and last syllables dominate. It sounds disagreeably like someone talking with his mouth full. Thus, the basic social exchange “How are you?” “So-so” is rendered as follows:

REAL SPANISH:

“¿Cómo está?”

“Más o menos.”

SPANGLISH:

“¡Oye, bro! ¿Cóm’ ‘id?”

“Mahomeynoe.”

Spanglish, blissfully unconcerned, continues to mutate and metastasize. *Los muebles* have become, collectively, *la furnitura*. *El hermano* has been replaced, pragmatically, by *el bro*. In like manner, *el rufó* has replaced *el techo* for “roof.” But, like *vacunar* and *la carpeta*, *el rufó* already has a distinct meaning,

denoting a blond or redheaded man. Well worth the sight would be a Chilean’s double take at his Newyorian host’s unremarkable comment: “I’m going out to hose down *el rufó*.”

Predictably, some well-meaning types, social workers in disguise, have labored to prove that Spanglish represents a new, fully realized language evolving according to its own valid dynamic. Rejecting the self-evident, they deny that Spanglish is a symptom of incompetence in both parent languages. Instead, these

optimists-cum-apologists contend that the ability to jump back and forth between English and Spanish actually requires an unusual level of bilingualism, and may give the speaker greater precision and subtlety than would be possible in either language alone.

This requires more than the usual suspension of disbelief. One can sympathize with the basic impulse—no one likes to get picked on, and the urge to rationalize can be irresistible. But still.

Angelo Falcón, the founder of the Institute for Puerto Rican Policy Inc., was raised in Brooklyn speaking what he calls “survival Spanish.” He cheerfully admits that when he took a course in Castilian Spanish at Columbia University, “I got creamed.” Perhaps as a consequence, he’s not about to put up with “some guy from Spain in a beret” lecturing the New York barrio about the quality of its speech. “When one of those intellectual types gets up,” he grinned, relishing the memories of seminars past, “I just tell him to go fuck himself and get a new beret.” He laughed. We did not. And we have never worn a beret. ☹

Are those boys over there sucking tokens out of the turnstile or what? No, they’re just jagueando, gufendo—hanging out, goofing around. And that man screaming? Must be friqueandose.

¿Aún después de años leyendo
ad del sobuay tú, bro? no le
digga al Español? No sue
tampoco lo Español.
Colombiano o Peruano,
thanks a una década de
mongrelnanza colonial en
Puerto Rico y Maabhattan.
MIGUEL HODGES se lo
afigula to y te uufinea pa’ que
no deye que anybody te
vacunee la carpeta.

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT GORDON LISH...

They come to him in droves because he is the most fascinating fiction-writing teacher in America, equal parts Svengali and boot camp sergeant. MIMI KRAMER explores Gordon Lish's harem scare 'em tactics.

He

didn't so much arrive as land, birdlike and silver-haired, in front of the podium. He waited a moment for the applause to die down. "I spent a lot of time on my costume," he confided to the audience.

"I was so excited about coming here tonight," the speaker went on, "I *pished* on my shoes." There was some laughter, and the man onstage arranged his face into a sheepish grin. "There," he said, "that tells you a lot about me. I'm the sort of guy who says *pish* in public."

Everyone was still smiling, but the laughter was getting a little ragged. This fellow Gordon Lish had some sterling qualities, clearly: timing, audience rapport and an endless supply of one-liners. But he was there as an authority on contemporary fiction. It was to hear contemporary fiction read aloud that most of the audience at Symphony Space had come.

Now he was describing himself as an inordinately neat person. Now he was telling us about his youngest son and his eldest daughter... some academic honors they had received....

Beside me, my friend—an emissary from the real world, as distinct from the literary one—leaned over and whispered in my ear, "What is this? I thought you were taking me to a literary event."

"I am," I said.

Gordon Lish is a literary event: a man who claims to be able to teach anyone—anyone at all—to be a great writer. Lish claims not to believe there's any such thing as genius or talent. "Any of you in this room," he tells his students, "could become the greatest literary artist of your time." And Gordon Lish is an editor at Alfred A. Knopf. Accordingly, he is probably the most sought after (and highly paid) writing teacher in America.

People hear of Lish and write to him or come to New York to see him, begging to be allowed into his "master class." They come from as far away as Texas and California. Women from the Midwest with small children leave their homes and families and check into a hotel room for three months just to be able to study with him.

Or they fly to New York for the evening. Young men come up from the South and take rooms in dark walk-ups that smell of urine. They take jobs as waiters and busboys, bartenders and security guards—just like young hoofers trying to break into show business. Which in a sense they are.

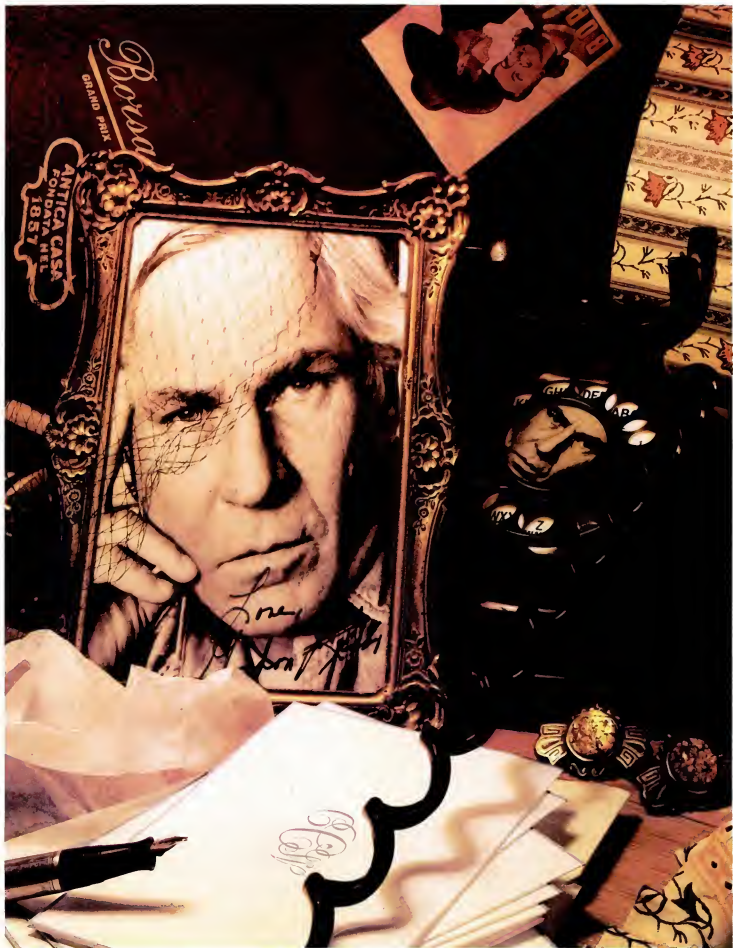
Gordon Lish is the Joseph Papp of American fiction: he specializes in discovering, inspiring, instructing and presenting first novelists. "Captain Fiction," *Vanity Fair* dubbed him in an article one of his protégées, Amy Hempel, wrote about Tactics of Fiction, the infamous workshop Lish held at Columbia University until this year. The tag has stuck.

He wants, he tells students, to be the teacher who produces the greatest number of important writers. And he can do it. By definition.

Knopf is the most prestigious publisher of new American fiction, the house that assures serious critical attention. As an editor at Knopf, Gordon Lish can put a writer on the map. Moreover, where other editors are content to publish their authors and leave it at that, Lish champions his, campaigning for them, turning them into *causes célèbres* and talking them up every chance he gets. He holds readings for the purpose of introducing them to the public—such as the one he held earlier this year for 23-year-old Yannick Murphy, his new star pupil, whose collection, *Stories in Another Language*, Knopf will publish next year. Lish predicts that *Party of Animals*—the tentative title of Harold Brodkey's tentative forthcoming novel from Knopf, will be "like nothing else in world literature... colossal!... monumental!... an amazement!... fucking breathtaking!... the greatest novel of the twentieth century." He says that when the book comes out, "all Americans will be proud."

Tactics of Fiction was by all accounts an epic ordeal. Students use words like "grueling," "hellish" and "sadistic" to describe it. What made the class so unpleasant was Lish's unique method of teaching. Other writing teachers take stories from their students and return

SO FAR



I KNOW THAT

his students are obsessed with him.

Make me the center of your universe, he tells them; and they do.

them with comments and suggestions. Lish has you read your stories aloud. He listens for as long as he can and when he can't stand it any longer, he cuts you off and tells you what he thinks.

Sometimes he cuts you off after the first sentence; sometimes he lets you go on for a paragraph or two—a *croak*, as Lish calls the unit of text between two “space breaks.” He may interrupt because the student has made an egregious error—some violation of “authority” or “stance.” Sometimes he cuts a student off simply because the style or subject fails to fit in with the Lish program. “Put it away,” he tells a student. “That’s not what I want to hear. That won’t help me to live or die. It doesn’t tell me anything about human truth.”

He keeps members of the class in a state of paralytic fear by alternating hyperbolic praise and censure, humiliating one student—“No, no, no, Parker, stop there. Parker, this is entirely self-serving!”—and telling another, “You’re an astonishment!” or “You’ll enter history.” He also fosters an atmosphere of ferocious competition by playing students off of one another, holding star pupils up to those who are failing to make the grade. “Oh, Goldfarb,” he will croon (he calls students by their last names), “you’re a marvel! I couldn’t be more excited. You’re a wonder, an astonishment! Goldfarb here”—addressing the class—“Goldfarb will be a great writer! Not like Parker. What you write is all about you, Parker. You’re writing to show us how smart you are, how beautifully you can write. But Goldfarb here will be a great writer! Goldfarb will enter history.”

Of course, many teachers employ drastic measures in order to get what they want out of students. But the student whose work strikes a dissonant note with Gordon Lish doesn’t get a second chance. And what doesn’t get read aloud in class will never be seen by him, for he never looks at his students’ work unless they specifically request it. He doesn’t routinely take their stories home with him. He doesn’t make written comments. He declaims.

Lish no longer teaches at Columbia, but he gives two private master classes, with about 15 students in each. The fee, “payable after selection” and “not returnable in any event,” is \$2,400. Which means that Gordon Lish makes \$72,000 per semester for 12 hours of teaching a week. The classes are held in students’ apartments, so there’s no overhead.

His students are obsessed with him—it’s one of the requirements of the class. Make me the center of your universe, he tells them; and they do. They live Lish and breathe Lish, wake, sleep and dream Lish; they read Lish and think Lish and in some cases even preach Lish; and because they are writers, they like to tell stories.

They talk about that harrowing class in which everyone had to reveal a deep dark secret. It’s a game Lish sometimes plays the first day: getting to know you, putting names to faces. Only instead of identifying yourself by age or occupation, you have to make a confession, share with the class some crime of body, soul or mind that you’ve never told anyone about before because you were ashamed. It has to be good, too, not something about your homosexuality or your parents’ divorce. Lish doesn’t want to hear how nervous you were about coming here tonight, he wants to hear about that time when you were a go-go dancer and got a man to take you home so you could make love to his wife. “Good,” Lish will say, “very good.” Learning to tell the truth—the hardest truth—is what writing fiction is all about, according to Lish. And you want to be a writer, so you tell him how when your lover leaves the house you go through all his possessions. “Wonderful,” he’ll say, “that’s great. We’re all like that—I’m like that...” And he’ll tell you how whenever his wife leaves the house he checks to see that all three of her diaphragms are still there.

When the votes are in and everyone has humiliated themselves, a surprise is in store for the class. Oops! says Lish; he’d forgotten to say that the secret didn’t have to be true.

Notions of “secrecy” and “seduction” are central to Gordon Lish, not only in the games he plays but also in his ideas about fiction. Indeed, part of what makes his high standards so hard on his students

is the fact that Lish has a very specific agenda. He’s not interested in writing that traffics in any of the things most people contend with fiction—plot, character, conflict, ideas. What Lish is after is a kind of fiction that gets at some bestial truth about human nature. Thus, Lish’s story “Resurrection,” which was heard this year at two public readings, is about a character’s unspeakable thoughts at his father’s funeral.

Two of the volumes of stories Lish has edited have the word *secret* in the title—*The Secret Life of Our Times* (1973) and *All Our Secrets Are the Same* (1976)—and the title of Lish’s own collection of stories is *What I Know So Far* (1984). Even the literary magazine that one of his students had planned to start earlier this year was to have been called *Secret America*. At a reading held this spring to raise money for *Secret America*, Yannick Murphy read a story about a character’s unspeakable thoughts at a friend’s funeral.

Not only are all our secrets the same, they’re all nasty ones, and nasty secrets are primarily what he thinks fiction should be about: *we all commit the same crimes*. For Lish, according to his students, *fiction is about being outrageous and stopping at nothing to find out what the fuck is going on. You say to the reader, “I’m going to tell you something you’ve never heard before—dangerous, dark, crazy things.”*

You have to be able to write what you wouldn’t want your own children to read, what will cost you your job, get you put in jail, what will make you look ugly. If you do—if you put your self-esteem on the line, writing about that part of yourself you don’t want to admit to—everyone will say, “Yes, we’re all like that, too.”

Lish likens the craft of writing fiction to an act of seduction: *You have to release yourself to a kind of violence, a passion. You have to make love to the page, to fuck it, to suck it off, to say to the reader, “Come with me, over here to the bed. I’ve never fucked anyone before, I must do this to you....” You have to put your hands on the reader.... You must not let go until he comes along, submits.*

Seduction and secrets also figure in most of the lore surrounding Gordon Lish himself—largely because he cultivates the image of a seducer. Students describe how he addresses others in the class in intimate or suggestive ways and how he boasts of the number of telephone calls he gets daily from the attractive young women he has published. “The way he was talking to one of the students made everyone think he was having an affair with her,” said one woman who visited Tactics of Fiction one night.

Visitors to the class or people who know someone studying with Lish are sometimes appalled by the hold he has on his students. Students themselves compare studying with Lish to est or boot camp, and laughingly allude to the private’s love for his drill sergeant or the hostage’s for his captor. “It’s sort of like being part of a cult,” a former student confesses. “When you’re in it, you don’t know you’re in it, you don’t know you’re a Moonie. It’s only afterward that you realize that’s what it was.” They attribute their feelings to Lish’s charisma. They call him “an unbelievably crazy, manipulative, egomaniacal person.” But “he’s honest about it,” the student explains, “so he gets away with it. He presents himself that way. He comes in and tells stories about the terrible things he’s done, the lies he’s told. And you know that even as he’s telling you, he’s manipulating you. He knows that he’s taking everybody for a ride, he actually *says* so. But he says, ‘You know I’m the best game in town.’”

In T. Gertler’s 1984 novel, *Elbowing the Seducer*, there is a charismatic editor and professor who dresses well, tells jokes incessantly, is a compulsive womanizer and fond of talking dirty in Yiddish. He smokes too much and drinks too much and his witty conversation is laced with obscenities. He dotes on his children but he forgets about them when they’re not there, and has a habit of characterizing the annoying actions of others as “dear.”

People say he is based on Gordon Lish. I wouldn’t know. I’ve never

The only Vodka
imported from Russia.



No matter how you drink it
Stoli's smoothness comes through.

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met Gordon Lish. I have read him and heard him speak. I've talked to people who have studied with him. But Lish didn't want to be interviewed for this article. He was rather apologetic and polite. He said it was "very dear" of me to be interested.

The fact is, I already knew a good deal about him, and the main thing I wanted to know wasn't something I thought he could tell me. I knew that before joining Knopf, Lish had been fiction editor at *Esquire*, where he'd been influential in publishing such authors as Raymond Carver, Cynthia Ozick, Harold Brodkey and Barry Hannah. More recently, I knew, he'd established a reputation for publishing pretty young women.

What I most wanted to know about Gordon Lish was different from what other people seemed to want to know. I wanted to know if it was only his being a well-known editor at Knopf that brought people flocking to study with him. Everyone else seemed interested in secrets and seduction.

Talking to students, I learned more. I learned that Lish speaks in many voices and loves to juxtapose mystical, oracular pronouncements with shockingly bald or Machiavellian remarks:

Speak to God will hear you, because your heart is pure!

Exploit anyone and everyone you can!

Never be petty, rancid or unclear!

Everybody's a whore: we're all spreading our legs for something!

Writing is like whacking off in public!

Give yourself permission to speak!

Everything is bullshit, anyway: the only truth is that which issues from the heart spontaneously!

Never use the word restaurant or the word thigh in a story.

I learned that Lish abhors the elegant or finely turned phrase.

I learned that Lish is a tireless name-dropper, given to opening his mail in class and boasting about the lengths to which people will go to get his attention.

I learned that Lish talks incessantly about himself—and since people who have met or studied with him talk incessantly about him, too, I heard a lot about his private life: the two marriages and the four children, and the elegant apartment in the Nineties off Fifth Avenue furnished with expensive antiques. I heard about how he "used to smoke too much and drink too much and fuck too much," and how he dotes on his children but forgets about them when they're not there.

What I was learning, of course, had nothing to do with his actual private life. The fact that a man talks about his wife's three diaphragms suggests nothing except that he wants to be seen in a certain light. What I was getting from students was a very special kind of hearsay—not the picture of a man so much as the picture of the way a man presents himself in a public arena; not that he was the sort of guy who says "pish," in other words, but the sort of guy who wants to be seen as that sort of guy.

From students I also heard a lot about other students, about writing that Lish dismissed as trivial but that students felt might have been encouraged in another context. There was the elderly man who would come in every week with perfect *Saturday Evening Post* stories and leave with his head in his hands. The Irish boy who wrote lyrical Irish stories. "You're too charming," Lish told him. "You'll never be anything but an entertainer."

I heard about one student—one of those young men who came up from the South—who wrote one great first sentence and could never get into another.

"You mean he could never write another?" I asked.

"No, Lish would never let him go on," a student told me. "He would read two lines and Lish would cut him off. Sometimes he'd let him go on for a paragraph, but it was just to be kind."

It's a nice sentence. It comes to me sometimes when there's nothing in particular going on in my mind: "The other side of the field was a week away." I couldn't find out what happened to him, though, and

nobody could remember his name.

Shortly after Lish phoned me to explain why he felt he couldn't consent to an interview, I began receiving hysterical phone calls and messages from some of the students I had already talked to. They were going out of their minds, they said, with worry. Apparently, the usual letter of acceptance for the master class that had just gone out included a new passage—referring, they said, to inordinate interest in his class on the part of the press, reminding them what a privilege it was to be studying with Lish, and giving them to understand that he would consider any indiscretions on their part a betrayal of trust. The incident puzzled me: none of the students who called had said anything the least bit disloyal or indiscreet.

There are many people who feel that, at a time when few editors will even glance at a manuscript that doesn't come through an agent, Lish's receptiveness to young and unpublished authors makes him a highly salutary force in publishing. "Lish really will read absolutely anything," said Leon Wieseltier, literary editor of *The New Republic*.

Also, a lot of what Lish has to say about fiction is true, and some of it is wonderful. Fiction doesn't tell us something about how to stay alive or how to meet our death. It should say, *Something happened—at least I think it did, and I wish you could have been there.*

The trouble is that none of what Gordon Lish says about fiction applies to the kind of writing he actually teaches and promotes. The stories of Harold Brodkey don't help me live or die; they don't even hold my attention. And that's the snag: Lish raises to the level of universal aesthetic what is really a whim about the absolute integrity of the ugly. It isn't that Lish doesn't have something valuable to say. He's just got hold of the wrong secrets. By settling for a cheap definition of "human truth," Lish has left aside the aspect of human truth that is probably most compelling: it isn't our inadequacies that are interesting but the ways we cover them up.

Take Gordon Lish, for example. What everyone else most wants to know about Lish has to do with the seductive aura that surrounds him. I kept hearing stories of the tales I'd hear if I went to the right places. But I never heard the "secrets" themselves, only rumors about them, innuendos so vague that I couldn't even say what they implied. Each student seemed to think she was alone in not having such stories to tell. I began to wonder if the aura of secrecy and seduction surrounding Lish might not just be part of a particular shadow he wants to cast. And thinking this about Lish made the question of his character infinitely more interesting to me. The man who seduces people, after all, is not half as intriguing as the man who plays the role of seducer. In a sense though, he is a seducer on a much grander scale.

Lish can only create "great writers" to the extent that a polite or credulous literary establishment is willing to be imposed upon. He gets pretty far by assuming the world will conduct itself with more decorum than he does: no hook came out to drag him offstage that night at Symphony Space.

Perhaps he is a great teacher. His students certainly seem to know him by heart. They can't get away from him; he walks around with them even when they're alone.

A story owns you and you own it.

Write because you're the only one who can tell a story and you'll die if you don't.

Don't say it unless you could go to jail or die from it.

You have to be willing to pay for what you write.

I was having lunch at a restaurant in Chelsea with a woman who had attended Tactics of Fiction. "It was like some ghastly form of torture," she was saying. "To have to sit there listening to this self-indulgent egotist interrupting and insulting everybody. Really, there was not a moment of interest or enjoyment—" She broke off suddenly and looked thoughtful. "Except he did say one or two things things about writing. I wrote them down, actually." She fished around in her handbag and brought out a notebook. "Yes, here it is," she said, finding the place. Smoothing down the pages, she began to read. 3



SPY
BONUS
HALLOWEEN
MASK

kids!



HOW TO WORK A HIGH RISE

A Halloween Manual

By Randi Hacker

& Jackie Kaufman

Halloween can be hell. ASK RUSTY M.

Rusty was a kid who let Halloween in a high rise get the better of him. One year, his loot from the first three floors of his Upper East Side building amounted to two tiny Milky Ways, a few loose Hershey Kisses, wax lips, four pennies and five apples he knew his mother would toss. It was 6:30. His bedtime was 8:30. He had 17 floors to go and he panicked.

While he was running out of the elevator on the fifth floor, he let the closing doors take a bite off the top of his bologna-sandwich costume. By the time the Otis man arrived, Rusty was a blubbering mess. His parents had to move to a ranch house in Yonkers.

THE PRECEDING STORY WAS A SPY DRAMATIZATION presented as a public service. Trick-or-treating in this city is not for the faint of heart. You have to be fast, you have to be smart and you've got to know ahead of time who's got the Heath bars and who's got the nectarines. A typical post-1960 high-rise has anywhere from 500 to 1,000 well-stocked households. With the right Halloween strategy, you'll be rolling in candy for the rest of your childhood. It just takes the right equipment, advance planning and a steely shrewdness beyond your years.

THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

Streamlining is the byword for costumes.

Follow these simple guidelines:

- Nothing with no feet
- Nothing with big feet
- Nothing with mayonnaise

(That means no mermaids, no Navy frogmen and no bologna sandwiches.)

ADVANCE PLANNING

Know your neighbors. Take a survey before the big night. Stand in the lobby with a sharp #2 pencil and a notebook. Question everyone who comes in. Ask: "Do you like candy?" Ask: "Do you like kids?" Ask: "Do you know that kids like Snickers more than any other candy?" Ask: "What apartment are you in?" Ask: "How much do you make?" Jot down their answers. This information will prove invaluable as you plot your course for Halloween night.

A STEELY SHREWDNESS BEYOND YOUR YEARS

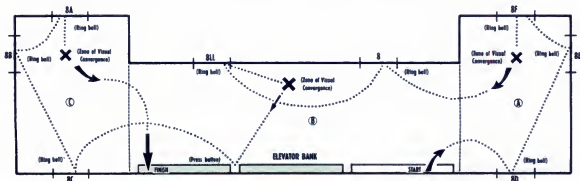
Time each of the elevators. Use a stopwatch. Don't repeat floors—high-rise hallways can look alike. Put a chalk mark outside the elevator on each floor. If anyone asks what you're doing, say, "Project October."

You don't have time to ring each doorbell, one at a time, and stand and wait. Divide each floor into three *Work Areas*. In each *Work Area* there is a place where everyone can see you. This is called the *Zone of Visual Convergence*. Find it. Mark it. After ringing all the doorbells, stand in it. (See illustration.)

Good luck, and don't forget to brush your teeth!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Exit elevator. Turn right. Run to *Work Area A*.
2. Ring bells of 8D, 8E and 8F.
3. Move quickly into the *Zone of Visual Convergence*.
4. Assume the *Open-Bag Position*.
5. When all three doors are open, yell, "Trick or treat!!"
6. Collect candy from everyone.
7. Yell, "Thank you!"
8. Run to *Work Area B*.
9. Repeat steps 2 through 7.
10. Run to elevator. Press call button.
11. Run to *Work Area C*.
12. Repeat steps 2 through 7.
13. Run into elevator. Catch breath.



NIGHT CLUBS

*The
Morning
After*

FLAT CHAMPAGNE IS AN ACQUIRED TASTE. A willful, perverse taste, really. It exists only in contrast, in opposition. It retains the life of the night before in the meager way a pressed flower preserves the memory of a spring idyll. It is like drinking nostalgia, like sipping entropy. Those who know wine say that all champagne, when flat, tastes alike. They miss the point. ● Nightclubs the morning after resonate with the evening before. It's not so much that their character can be more clearly glimpsed in the daylight, but

Article
by
Richard
Stengel.
Photographs
by
Sylvia
Plachy.

rather that something of their essence is distilled and spilled over. What seemed like spontaneity last night appears calculated this morning. Visiting a nightclub during the day is like going to an ancient ruin; you must populate it imaginatively. The night people give it its character and hide it at the same time. ● By day, the clubs are all involved in a vain struggle against decay. Yet the day people seem oddly cheerful, like happy warriors. The cleanup men could be blithe sweepers-up after the apocalypse. Some images repeat themselves: bare coat-check rooms, the hangers arrayed like repetitive, minimalist sculpture; the drone of vacuums where relentless music once pulsed; the acrid smell of disinfectant replacing the sour sweetness of perspiration and perfume. And the velvet ropes. At night they are unbreakable chains of demarcation, the hierarchical border that divides outsider from



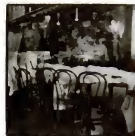
insider, us from them. By day they hang like strings of sausages behind the door, impotent and limp. ● In the morning, the Limelight is a kind of photographic negative of California's Crystal Cathedral. No light shines through its smudged stained glass. It is stumpy rather than soaring. The altar bristles with sound equipment. Monitors are stacked on either side like electronic choirboys. At night, there are plenty of people for this church to minister to: hollow-eyed men go through the catechism of flirtation. And if spiked hair were a sign of psychic revelation (as it is in cartoons), the place would brim with saved souls. At night, at the door to the VIP room, a supplicant pleads to pass the velvet barrier. "I just want to introduce her to Michael. Her name's Calimari. I found her on the street." ● The streamlined, mechanized and pru-

dently maintained Palladium reveals itself by day as a factory for amusement. The pursuit of pleasure here is definitely a scientific enterprise. The deejay's booth, overlooking the dance floor, is the giant glowing brain of the place. Inside the booth a computer blinks amid long, sleek machines with hundreds of switches. It looks like a rigorous and well-funded laboratory investigating the nature of fun. ➤



TOP TO BOTTOM:
behind the scenes at
Limelight; the Surf
Club's signature
swordfish;
Limelight's limp
velvet ropes.

The club is stately in its austere emptiness. With its high interior walls and open central dance floor, it could be a Futurist palazzo haunted with echoes of day-old revelry. But the carpet, pockmarked with cigarette burns, gives it away.



Upstairs in the Mike Todd Room, stools sit upside down on the bar. Frilly paper tablecloths are bunched up on top of the counter like prom dresses thrown down in a fit of pique. In the pantry leading to the kitchen, the busboys' motto is spray-painted in black on the plywood wall: BUS OR DIE!

By day, the Surf Club could be a seedy West Indies resort bar in the off-season. The swordfish mounted on the wall glistens; the sweet-stale smell of rum hovers over

the bar. The nightly denizens seem appropriate to the island motif: women with turned-up noses, freshly tanned even after Labor Day, their pearls set off against burned skin, talk earnestly with short-haired men in white shirts and tightly knotted ties. Many of the women, like the men, are wearing business suits. Question: does a woman look even sillier dancing in a suit than a man? At the Surf Club, the women tend to remove their shoes; the men, to raise their fists in the air at a song they like. At the bar, a woman with spiky hair is looking out of place and out of sorts. She's a flight attendant for Delta Airlines. She tells me why she likes preppy men: "They're clean and they don't drool on you."

At night, the Milkbar gives off an aura of disinfected decadence. Bare white walls, white floor—they are painted once a week—create a feeling of being nestled inside a marshmallow womb. The morning light emphasizes the minimal decoration. But that is the whole point: the people are the decoration. There is nothing





to distract from the presentation of self—except, perhaps, another self.

Upstairs, it feels like nothing so much as the lunchroom of a suburban junior high school. Molded plastic chairs, round white Formica tables, the washed-out cafeteria colors of the early sixties. The manager explains that while the upstairs used to be a VIP lounge, the club is building another one a floor higher. The Milkbar's phone number and address are unlisted for a reason. "We don't want every Dick, Tom and Harry from bridge-and-tunnel city here," she says, in that order. She prefers the emptiness of the day. "I come here at night and the people annoy me."

At Area, the Okidata printer in the office belches out the names for tonight's guest list. I count—and this is not scientific—seven Friedmans, three of them named Mark and most with downtown addresses. From the dance floor, the club looks like an amusement-park house of horrors that languished on account of terminal unscariness. The night I visited Area was unusual, or so the guard at the door told me. There was a party for a neighborhood basketball association, and except for a lone blond girl sweeping up, I was the only person there who was not middle-aged and black. "How do you like this place?" I asked a woman with glasses and a flower-print dress. Then, as if I had reminded her of something, she looked around, shrugged her shoulders and said, "Ain't bad."

Steve, the club's handy-

man—ponytail, sideburns, cracked front tooth and nice crooked smile—explains that people frequently steal



faucets and throw glasses down the toilets. To retrieve the glasses, he has to remove the entire toilet. "I've done it so much," he says brightly, "it's almost like changing a light bulb." We walk



down to the bathroom, and two out of three faucets are missing. But, like a memento amore, there is also a dainty pink camisole dangling over the bathroom door. In a supply closet there is a bit of runic graffiti. A stick figure, with a balloon of dialogue extending from his mouth, is saying, PLAY MORE TECHNO SHIT. The caption reads: TYPICAL AREA GUEST. I mention it to Steve. He confesses to being the artist. ☺

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: junked cat people from Area's "Acid Flash" installation; the Area dance floor decorated for "American Highways"; the Milkbar's pooch, Bali, cleaning glasses; stacked chairs at Area; an

abandoned umbrella at the Surf Club; Limelight's nave by daylight; Palladium's Mike Todd Room. **CENTER:** the Milkbar, freshly painted and disinfected.

**Penn & Teller
present the World's First
All-Computerized
Electronic Card Trick.**



TRICK



Penn & Teller have devised this easy-to-follow method of using digitally recorded random-access compact discs to perform a card trick in which virtually all the work of the magician is done with an electronic on-off flowchart.

Let's give it a try.

You will need:

1. A standard deck of 52 playing cards.
2. A partner.
3. A Touch-Tone™ telephone.

Procedure:

1. Remove the jokers and all instructional or advertising cards.
2. Shuffle the cards thoroughly, and cut the deck once.
3. Begin to deal the cards one at a time onto a table. Instruct your partner to say "Stop!" at any time.
4. Without looking at it, hand your partner the last card dealt.
5. Ask your partner to turn his/her back and to look at the card in private.
6. Count the number of cards that you dealt on the table. Have that number ready *before* you move on to Step 7. In Step 7, you will be asked to enter this number by pressing the numbered keyboard on your Touch-Tone™ telephone.
7. Call the Penn & Teller computer at SPY Headquarters, (212) 925-7211. ☎

BEGINNING OF THE END

AN
ENCHANTED
LAND
WHERE BIDETS
ARE THE

CONDO

MINIMUM

THERE IS A STRANGE AND WONDERFUL new world emerging in the heart of Manhattan. It is a world of "harmony and balance," of "comfort and style," of "opulence and value." There is no noise, no trash and no hassles in this world, only "amenities and services." There are no hustlers, no ugly people and no losers. There is no present or future, only an amorphous, elegant, Anglo-Saxon past. Comparative adjectives do not exist in this world, only superlatives. Truth is a flexible category. Even the laws of physics are subject to interpretation. This is the world of condominium living, where the location is always "perfect," the architecture is always "distinguished" and the prose is always purple.

Imagine.

It's 11:00 PM Sunday evening.

A nightcap, perhaps.

One last look at the lights dancing

on the waters of the East River.

You request a wake-up call for 8:00 AM, knowing you have a breakfast meeting on the lower level at 8:30.

A week ahead, filled with professional challenges, and personal triumphs.

And a home in which to live it all...

The Cosmopolitan.

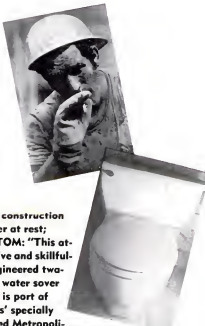
—from a sales brochure for "The Cosmopolitan Condominiums."

New York is aglut in new condominiums. They were virtually nonexistent in the city five years ago, and now at least 100 condominium projects are either built or on the way. According to the Real Estate Board of New York, 42 new condominium buildings, with 5,238 apartments, are being completed in Manhattan during the second half of this year alone. In 1987 there will be 34 more buildings, with 5,785 more apartments. Many of those under construction are already hawking apartments from floor plans and showing all manner of jerry-built model apartments set up in off-site sales offices.

The immediate cause of the condo glut is last year's cutback of the 421(a) tax abatement program. Before abolishing this giveaway throughout most of Manhattan south of 96th Street (it still exists in the boroughs and up-town), the city allowed developers one last chance to scramble through the loophole. If they could get their buildings into the ground by November 29, 1985, developers would still be able to apply for the tax abatement.

But competition for buyers is fierce. All over town real estate sales agents are in a frenzy trying to move their merchandise, seducing would-be home-owners with whatever gimmicks, extras and cornball come-ons their copywriters can come up with. Gas stations used to give out drinking glasses; developers throw in bidets. The more expensive the property (the going rate is between \$300 and \$700 per square foot), the more hysterical the promotional scenarios, which often borrow promiscuously from a wide range of sources: from *Gigi* to *Gatsby*, Wharton to Waugh, *Pygmalion* to Proust.

Among the most brazen has been "The Royale," a 42-story tower now rising on 64th Street at Third Avenue, which has appropriated for itself the slogan "Remembrance of Things Past," with no apologies to Marcel. Perhaps we are meant to feel nostalgia in the conspicuous absence of a private health club here (most of The Royale's rivals offer exercise facilities); there is no Nautilus in *Within a Budding Grove*. The building's design evokes hardly anything at all—the architecture is more bad bauhaus than *belle époque*.



TOP: construction worker at rest; BOTTOM: "This attractive and skillfully engineered two-piece water saver toilet is part of Briggs' specially crafted Metropolitan series, named after Metropolitan Tower."—from Metropolitan Tower's promotional brochures.

TOPICA

Picky, picky. The centerfold of *The Royale's* lavish sales brochure, for example, is a quaint rendering of the developers' idea of the perfect doorman. The dapper old gentleman, dressed in full neo-Edwardian regalia, bears a striking resemblance to Sir Thomas Lipton, at least as Sir Thomas is depicted on the sides of Lipton tea boxes. Across the top of this two-page spread is another banner slogan, "Welcome to the splendour [sic] of a lost golden era." Open the centerfold and you are greeted with a four-page spread worthy of Lerner and Loewe, with yet another banner headline, "Welcome to a world of Privilege. Indulgence. Excess. Opulence." (But no bidet.)

Still shopping? You might try one other high-profile pile across town, where Bobby Zarem, the preternaturally energetic PR man, is trying hard to sell Metropolitan Tower, the black wedge on 57th Street that lies about its height. Here the image is based on the mythic virtues of developer Harry Macklowe. From the vast amounts of promotional prose that Macklowe's sales office is putting out, the clear impression emerges that one should like Metropolitan Tower not just because it has a "Chauffeur's Waiting Lounge" and a "Communications Center" complete with "facsimile machine" and ticker tape for stock quotations—one should like Metropolitan Tower because Harry Macklowe likes it.

"My feeling for good design goes way back," he writes. "As a child I painted and drew. Did my first building project in mechanical drawing class. Later I..." He goes on like this for several pages, which may help explain why, at press time, in nine months of selling, Metropolitan Tower, "the only true super-luxury building in New York," had only moved 40 percent of its "residences"—low even in this market. But when Macklowe finally gets down to it, the real reason he seems to like his tower so much is that "thanks to its height and orientation and the manner in which it violates the city grid, some regard Metropolitan Tower as 'insolent.'" He's produced an insolent violator—and apparently Macklowe couldn't be happier.

At "The Belgravia," another very expensive condominium tower, on East 79th Street, which is desperate to sell off its remaining apartments before the fall flood, they are promoting an entirely different, international mix of mythologies. The Belgravia takes its name from the Belgravia section of London, home to much of the royal family as well as to a number of writers and artists, with whom you will surely develop an ineffable bond once you take up residence here. But beyond Britishness, this "architectural buffet" offers an "authentic Japanese tea garden with tinkling fountains" and "Swiss Hotel service," as well as "Manhattan's most assured address..."

East 79th and Park Avenue." If you move in, however, you will find yourself living a great deal closer to Lexington Avenue than to Park, but what's a couple of hundred feet, between, uh, distinguished residents. —Peter Lemos

THEY ALL LOOK LIKE

ANTS FROM HERE

CRITICS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO take themselves seriously. To paraphrase Thoreau: if they won't, who will? Well, not us.

David Denby, the shrill film critic of *New York* magazine, likes to tell it how it is, or should be, or could be, if only people would LISTEN TO ME. "Stand By Me isn't perfect or overwhelming or a masterpiece or anything like that. While watching it, however, I had a pleasant and odd sensation. I felt I was actually looking at a movie."

So far, so good. The film critic of *New York* magazine, reviewing a new movie, has discovered that the movie is actually... a movie. But the delirious Denby, master of the obvious, then feels obliged to instruct us on what a movie really is. "That is, a work produced by someone who had found something to say and had put together the best script and actors he could find in order to say it, and had, further, coordinated the script and actors with the look of the film, all of this effort producing a certain mood that fluctuates on the surface from moment to moment, according to the dramatic life of the scene, yet holds steady, at the foundation, from beginning to end."

Little wonder sensible people have stopped going to the movies. To keep pace, the *Times* has stopped sending sensible reviewers. With Janet Maslin on maternity leave and Vincent Canby on summer vacation (though some would argue that the vacation began much earlier), Abe Rosenthal had an idea: send anyone. So the *Times* rookies barraged readers with clanky prose, clamoring for attention like rivals in freshman English. Chipper Caryn James, cranky Walter Goodman, wishy-washy Nina Darnton, squeamish Nan

SEMI-STAR
NO MORE

IT MUST HAVE BEEN ALL THE FUSS OVER THOSE STATELY TREASURE HOUSES OF BRITAIN. As the dust and scaffolding clear from where bodegas once stood, a little empire of condominiums is emerging. What happened in the suburbs, where developers christened muddy tract-house streets Thistle Hollow Glen and Pine Meadow Rush, is happening here. New Yorkers aren't just buying into buildings anymore, but into Mews, Courts, Lanes—even Commons and Lodges, as in Chelsea Commons, "the Uncommon Condominium." Then there's The Packard, Curzon House, The Dunhill, The Savoy, The Corinthian, Hampton House, The Warren House, Highgate, The Channel Club, Morgan Court and Murray Hill Mews. Why all the Anglophilic names? SPY asked.

The Copley 2000 Broadway: "We don't know," said a confused sales agent. "The sponsor probably pulled it out of a hat."

The Bromley 225 West 83rd Street: "We had meeting after meeting, came up with pages of suggestions, deliberated for weeks and weeks, but we couldn't agree on anything," said a publicist. "Finally we just named it after the developer's company [Bromley Development], because it had the least negative connotations." The developer himself, William Haines (The Hainsworth was among the mixed names), elaborated: "The great thing about The Bromley is that it sounds nice, and everybody can spell it."

The Belgravia 124 East 79th Street: "It's a very famous neighborhood in London. The queen lives there," said the sales agent. But will it be just like London inside? "No," he said. "More international. It will be very charming—with lots of security."

The Monarch 200 East 89th Street: "We started hearing a lot of kinglike comments about the building," the agent said. "Monarch just seemed to fit."

The Fitzgerald 201 West 74th Street: "We were going to name it The Darwin," said the marketing coordinator. "But then the developer said he wanted an art deco lobby, so we had to think art deco. Finally we came up with F. Scott Fitzgerald. Nobody liked The Darwin anyway—it made us think of monkeys."

The Victoria 7 East 14th Street: "We were originally going to name it Gotham Tower, but then we realized we were in a renaissance neighborhood, so we named it The Victoria."

—James Reginato

YE OLDE SIDEBAR

Robertson, oblique D.J.R. Bruckner, even rockin' Stephen Holden got in on the gag. Studios as well as moviegoers were understandably confused. The summer interns were so inept that nothing could be turned into a coherent ad blurb, and suddenly the wit and wisdom of Joel Siegel and Peter Travers became indispensable.

Dog-day sloppiness got to the *Times*. Sunday Book Review editors as well. They apparently hadn't considered the grudge factor when they published Katie Leishman's ludicrously harsh review of David Black's book, *The Plague Years*, based on his National Magazine Award-winning article about AIDS for *Rolling Stone*. It seems that Leishman's AIDS piece for *The Atlantic* had been up for an NMAA, too, but in a different category. She didn't win.

The *Times*'s classical music reviewer, Donal Henahan, seems to see things through a pink haze of nostalgia. Even as the U.S. government was certifying Ferdinand Marcos as the mastermind of the remote-control coup attempt, Henahan found himself overflowing with gratitude toward the lizards ex-dictator and bloated ex-dictatress. "I hope you were as cheered as I was," Henahan wrote in mid-August, "to read recently that Van Cliburn paid frequent visits to the Manhattan town house of his old friends Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos, who kept three Steinway grands at the ready for just such occasions." Cheered? Why, we were jubilant, giddy, virtually *crazed* with fondness for the good old days of Philippine arts patronage. "What heartens me," Henahan continued, without a trace of irony, "is the realization that an audience of sorts would have attended to these impromptu performances."

Discussing another musical matron, Ben Fong-Torres, music columnist for *GQ*, gets straight to the point. Here's the delightfully fearless opening sentence of "She's Zadorable," his review of "that compact queen of kitsch," Pia Zadora: "I wouldn't be surprised," begins Fong-Torres, "if you hadn't bothered to read even this note."

We are distressed to note that *The Village Voice*'s David Edelstein is a man obsessed. Reviewing *Vamp*, he describes Grace Jones as "lean as a phallus and considerably more lethal." Reviewing *Aliens* for *Rolling Stone*, he describes the monsters as "spidery wangdoodles with tongues like little phalli." Reviewing the original *Alien*, he describes its "intricately coded sexual imagery—from the womblike mother ship to the unmistakable vaginal openings of the alien craft to the beast itself." And what of the beast itself? It's "a shape-

shifting dragon both feminine and phallic, like a little boy's nightmare of a castrating mom."

Edelstein clearly has a dangerous case of the wangdoodles. But he isn't finished yet. *Alien* was "a cold, brilliant act of cinematic rape." In *Aliens*, Sigourney Weaver "straps her artillery in place and cocks her pulse gun." She enters "the womb of the universe." Then "comes the most delicate, touching moment in this head-splitting, brontosaurus monster picture." Tell us, Edelstein! "The sad little cock of



Weaver's head before she opens fire." And so, with that "sad little cock" of her head, she blows away the phallic-tongued and spidery wangdoodles. "Mamma mia," Edelstein writes, bringing his review to a limp, exhausted close, "that's entertainment."

The big summer entertainment was, of course, *Heartburn*—if you discount *Howard the Duck*—and most critics were unmoved. *The Washington Post* knows better, however. Its boy reviewer, Paul Attanasio, found *Heartburn* not merely diverting, but "a masterpiece." A *what?* "A collaboration of mature artists at the peak of their craft, and something of a summing up for Mike Nichols, who, more successfully than any other American director, has staked out the terrain where men and women meet as his own."

That line—"staked out the terrain where men and women meet as his own"—is no masterpiece. It doesn't make sense. In a separate Sunday piece defending his lonely point of view, Attanasio self-righteously added a new (albeit pip-squeaky) voice to the "Why the Movies Are So Bad" symposium:

"[This [*Heartburn*]'s box-office failure] could mean I was wrong in calling *Heartburn* a masterpiece. But it could also mean that *Heartburn* is one of those classic films like *Rules of the Game* or Nichols's own *Carnal Knowledge*, which are simply misunderstood in their own

time.... If a movie like *Heartburn* doesn't get an audience, it can't be explained by videocassettes or the youth market or MTV and all the rest. It means that if movies are bad, we're only getting what we deserve." *Agree with me, or civilization is finished.*

Other critics were divided on small matters. Meryl Streep "is such a good actress that she makes you believe she looks Jewish" (Goodman, the *Times*). "Streep—even with the addition of a frizzy brunet fright wig—does not look like anyone's idea of a New York-bred Jewish princess" (Kathleen Carroll, *The Daily News*). "The explicitly Jewish atmosphere has been pared down to a few inflections in Meryl Streep's speech" (Denby, *New York*). "One of the strengths of the book was its shrewd self-deprecating Jewish humor. But Streep...swallows her one-liners or holds them at arm's length" (Molly Haskell, *Vogue*). "The curious thing about Streep's performance is that she looks New Yorkish but sounds Middle American" (Andrew Sarris, *The Village Voice*). "Her performance drifts in and out of Jewishness" (Stephen Schiff, *Vanity Fair*).

Schiff, *Vanity Fair*'s critic-at-large, which is like being a snowplow-driver to an Arab pasha, had to be on his toes for his critical assessment of *Heartburn*'s Jack Nicholson. Schiff (previous critic-at-large blockbuster cover story: "Ron Reagan—A Star in Stripes") was up against cover stories on Nicholson from *The New York Times Magazine* and *Rolling Stone*. He had to pump it up. He had to nail Nicholson in a way the others hadn't. What ace did he have up his sleeve, what masterstroke of critical understanding could he produce that would send all the other Jack Nicholson commentators into mortified retirement?

The opening line of his story, a line that would set the tone of the brilliance that was to follow, would surely be a knockout blow. Here it is! "Watching Jack Nicholson eat," begins Schiff, "has become one of the essential movie experiences."

He continues: "It's like watching Bette Davis swagger or Humphrey Bogart smoke or James Dean smolder and pine." Forget James Dean's "smolder and pine." Hands up, anyone who can name even one Nicholson film in which he eats? His only notable eating scene entailed not eating, because he couldn't get what he wanted, a side order of wheat toast in *Five Easy Pieces*. He eats a pizza in *Heartburn*. He takes a bite. He chews a bit. Then he swallows. Streep, according to Pauline Kael of *The New Yorker*, "can't chew a bite of food without acting out chewing." But Nicholson just, well, he just eats his pizza.—*Michèle Bennett*

WHATEVER

IS A

FATGIRL

TO WEAR!

A WONDROUS, WOMANLY THING: Finally, it happened. Zaftig is in, thin is out. Just ask the Duchess of York, patron saint of the Rubenesque. Do you think that when Fergie cuddles up to her prince at night she whines in his ear, "Andrew, did you like Koo's body better?" She does not. Fergie is a happy size 14. Fergie is *womanly*.

The problem is that fleshiness has been a little slow catching on in New York. Not among real people, of course, like housewives or women in public relations, but among the swells, the ladies who lunch. They can't quite grasp the concept, except Tina Brown, who insists on taking it to extremes. Chessy and Mica and Pat are as sawbored as ever. Helen Gurley Brown will *never* get hip, so to speak, because, after all, to have *flesh* is to be a *mouseburger*! Amanda Burden will look like a waif when she's 90.

Still, there are teeny little hints of dawning enlightenment. Nan Kempner, queen of the underfed, recently showed up at Body Design by Gilda, where she was overheard confessing that her son had put her up to it. What Gilda can do for a 99-pound frame remains to be seen, and fellow leg-lifters report that Nan has some problems, especially doing the hydrant, because she seems weak—from hunger, no doubt. But it's a start.

If a fashion role model like Kempner or Jackie O. or Ann Getty (who is not a serious offender) or even Iman decided to put on a few extra pounds—Cybill Shepherd and Kelly McGillis can't fight this fight alone—imagine what might happen. Women with curves could sit in the open, maybe even at Le Cirque, and eat chocolate mousse. They wouldn't have to suffer the smirks of anorexics pushing dry asparagus around their plates. It would be a whole new era. It can happen! Only one major obstacle remains. *What will they wear?*

Because if la toute New York is a little slow to catch on, imagine where designers stand on the issue. Do you think Oscar de la Renta, friend and dresser of the scrawns, can think

big? Heck, no. Asked why he doesn't design for the fuller-figured woman, Oscar once replied, "I am a designer, not an upholsterer."

And what about Paris?

PARIS WHEN IT FIZZLES: The operative word at the couture collections was *FUN!* Followed closely by *MAD!* and then *WACKY!* *ZANY!* *DELIRIOUS!* The hot designer (the first new hot designer in *seasons*) is Christian Lacroix, a *FUN!* *MAD!* young man who has enlivened the house of Patou, which has, for all intents and purposes, been dormant for years. The way people tell it, the ladies were frantic to get into Patou, hijacking limos and hijacking it over to see the new kid, then dropping unkind little *bons mots* about their former darling, Yves. Banker's wife Susie Gutfreund, always on top of things, picked up a chic little wool riding jacket with neon rhinestones on it. Even Marie-Helene de Rothschild, the high priestess of all that is holy in fashion, blessed the *MAD!* young man with words of acceptance. *Women's Wear Daily* is gushing about the 35-year-old "merry madman"—which is interesting, because if you had worn a Patou "bubble dress" around Manhattan last year, *W* would have branded you a Fashion Victim quicker than you could say Gloria von Thurn und Taxis, who, incidentally, all but discovered the new Patou. How about an empire-waisted, ribbed, belted, lavender mink miniskirt? Or, more conservatively, a baby-doll minidress with petticoats and bouffant sleeves like pumpkins? Show that one to the boys in the boardroom. Empire-waisted wide-leg pants that would have done Ray Bolger's scarecrow proud? Bustles? Trains? Will the zaftigs wear this stuff? Will young female associates at Cravath Swaine? Will Fergie embrace it? You decide. Meanwhile, Yves Saint Laurent, looking drab and conservative by comparison, doesn't offer much relief to the new chubbies. Some of his evening dresses have major bows behind. But poor Yves has had a bad year. He turned 50, Bergdorf's dumped him (the last designer they visibly dumped was Halston, not an auspicious precedent), and now a lot of his ladies are losing interest because he is not *MAD!* or *FUN!* or *WACKY!* enough. He has taken to granting interviews, however, in which he says clever things like this: "People think decadence is debauched. Decadence is simply something very beautiful that is dying."

DESIGNER DISEASES: A couple of weeks ago, Saks Fifth Avenue threw its annual SFA/USA gala fashion show and dinner dance. Well, Saks didn't actually "throw" it, since it cost a hundred and fifty a head to get in. At this party, designers (each assisted by a

rich customer, er, chairwoman) lend their talents to benefit their favorite charity, and there wasn't a declassé cause in the joint. Adolfo and Caroline Amory frolicked for cancer (American Cancer Society), as did Carolina Herrera and Nan Kempner (Sloan-Kettering). Geoffrey Beene and Nina Griscom helped defenseless animals (Humane Society of New York—no word on whether Nina wore her fox coat); Bill Blass and Louise Melhado sipped champagne on behalf of poor youths (Just One Break); Mary McFadden and Carol Petrie scarfed canapes so that dancers might dance (New York City Ballet); and Oscar de la Renta and Pat Buckley grinned at the paparazzi for the sake of the ailing (Hospital for Special Surgery). Interestingly, even though AIDS is becoming fashionable in fundraising circles and is of special interest to Seventh Avenue, it wasn't represented. No designer had asked for it. —*T.S. Lord*

MY DINNER

WITH NIXON, THE

UNDEAD

PRESIDENT

[Nixon's] exurban home at Saddle River [New Jersey] is luxurious but not palatial; he travels widely, lunches and dines at Lutèce and Le Cirque in Manhattan... and cultivates a new generation of reporters at quiet dinners over fine wine.

—"The Road Back," *Newsweek*, May 19, 1986

BEFORE LONG WE'LL SEE IT ALL ON *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, right after Joey Heatherton on photo safari. (Don't bet against it: the Burger King autograph spree proves that the newest Nixon is a schlockier Nixon.) Until then, we pebles—the four billion or so of us whose chances of being invited to one of the Dickster's at-home rehabilitation dinners are slim to none—must make do with fragmentary dispatches from the chosen.

Fragmentary because these affairs, at which Nixon feeds food and opinions to a small group of powerful journalists or assorted global experts, are usually off the record. *Newsweek*, however, was able to get an on-the-record interview during a

POLITICS



light working lunch. In exchange, it produced a cover story whose complacency must have embarrassed even the man it dubbed "The Sage of Saddle River." (Nickname-wise, Nixon has come a long way from Iron Butt, Rufus and the Mad Monk.) Far more interesting than the article's main theme—that Nixon is *back*, triumphantly and for keeps—are the scattered life-style details it contains. We learn, for example, that Nixon watches nothing but long-since cancelled cop shows —*Barnaby Jones*, *The Rockford Files* and *Police Woman*; and that while researching his new book, 1999, he discovered this amazing factlet: "1997 will be the 300th anniversary of the invention of the flush toilet."

A tasty snack, but I wanted the entire bill of fare. Fortunately, I found an actual dinner guest willing to squeal about deep background. Because these dinners are carefully choreographed, his experience is typical. So come on, comb your hair and put on your splash bib—we're going to Dick Nixon's for dinner.

Step 1. *The invite.*

You are invited by telephone. Later, an embossed reminder note containing a map arrives, instructing you to come to Saddle River at 5:00 p.m. Spouses and significant others are not mentioned, and immediately you find yourself wondering: will the social Nixon be as stiff and anal as the historical Nixon? Deep down you already know.

Step 2. *"Hiya."*

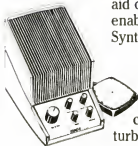
Nixon's sprawling, modern, California-style house, like Graceland, is shielded from the road by hedges and trees containing leaves. (This is the first and only Elvis parallel, so savor it.) At the end of a long, curving driveway you disembark. Nixon is there, wearing gray slacks, blue blazer, white shirt and rep tie. His manner is relaxed and friendly, but somewhat forced. You brace yourself for what reporters have called his "gawkily salty" language. (A sample: "That guy doesn't know his ass from Shinola.") Instead, he says, "I've been invited to places so often by the press that I thought I would reciprocate," and you're suddenly longing for the Nixon of the Watergate tapes.

When greeting you personally, Nixon is likely to dish out an incongruous line that reflects an intimate knowledge of your past. Don't be startled: his staff provides him with detailed biographical info on all his guests. "Ah, yes, Ed," he might say, "1952 was a hell of a year for both of us, wasn't it? I became vice president. You, then age 12, were playing summer baseball for Mudcat Bait and Tackle in Fort Smith, Arkansas."

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Step 3. "We're real proud of it."

Nixon shows off the grounds, including the attached garage apartment for his private security guards, the tennis court (which inspires more banter: "You know, I'm not the type who plays much tennis") and a neatly landscaped swimming pool. You try to imagine Pat doing a cannonball, Nixon yelling "Alligator, charge!"—anything to get your mind off the image of Julie and Dave taking a nude moonlight swim.

Inside, Nixon displays gifts from world leaders (including a painting by Madame Chiang Kai-shek), the large, formal room where he writes and the phone with automatic buttons for Tricia, Julie, Bebe and the White House. You search in vain for the Big Enchilada or Rabbi Korff. Nixon takes you into his den, with its cathedral-style beamed ceiling and shiny red lacquered walls. Pat, he says, is upstairs and won't be coming down. That means boy talk, Nixon style.

For the next hour you sit, boozeless, while Nixon delivers a very informed, boring state-of-the-world lecture. More must be done about the Middle East, he says. Arms control is at a critical juncture. The next ten years will tell the tale. This goes on until 6:00 p.m., when a young butler comes in and takes drink orders. Nixon says, "He makes the best drinks in this country." Amid grateful slurping Nixon deflects a question about Watergate. "Dragging out Watergate drags down America," he once said. Now he's kindly and bland. "Best not to dwell on that," he says, and returns to global policy. No one dares ask him the question that's probably on the mind of everyone in the room, "Mr. President, can we watch *Wheel of Fortune*?"

Step 4. "Let's eat."

Dinner is served at 6:30. "Give 'em hors d'oeuvres and maybe they won't come back for the main course," Nixon said in 1973, referring to John Dean and himself, respectively. These days he serves yuppie food. The menu includes chilled smoked salmon with capers and pearl onions, fillet of beef and Châteaufort-Lafite-Rothschild '61. Formal conversation resumes during dinner. A slight break occurs when someone asks about baseball, and Nixon begins a methodical, team-by-team, player-by-player analysis of both major leagues. Then Nixon gets back to politics, handicapping the November elections, state by state, predicting that the Republicans will hold on to the Senate.

Step 5. "So long."

After ice cream, it's back to the den for more drinks and coffee. Your time is running out. Nixon might do five more desultory min-

utes on the nature of leadership in America, but his mind is already on *Barnaby Jones*. Soon he gently hints that it's time for you to go. ("There's no game tonight, so we can talk a little more.") A few minutes later, rolling down the driveway, you reflect sadly on your vague, hopeful daydreams about Nixon getting drunk and going wild. But tonight there was to be no raving about the press—"the ravenous beast with an insatiable appetite," he once called it—no gutter diatribes, no kneeling on the carpet for group prayer. This time, Nixon really was in control.—*Alex Heard*



CANNON'S KING LEAR: THE NORMAN CONQUEST

Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

—*King Lear* I, iv

AT THE 1985 CANNES FILM FESTIVAL, Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus of Cannon Films—the new saviors of Hollywood, according to *New York* magazine's David Denby—got a lot of publicity by signing a deal on a cocktail napkin with Jean-Luc Godard. This year's Cannes issue of *Variety* contained over 60 Cannon ad pages, and one of them announced that Godard would direct *King Lear*, the movie, from a screenplay by Norman Mailer. Later there would be unsuccessful attempts to cast Woody Allen as the fool and Richard Nixon as Lear, but Nixon was too busy rehabilitating (see *POLITICS*, p. 48), and they wound up giving the title role to Mailer.

Golan and Globus are infamous

for making wild pronouncements before the contracts (as opposed to napkins) have been signed. For years they clucked about doing a film version of the play *Duet for One* that would star Faye Dunaway. The finished film, scheduled to open this Christmas, stars Julie Andrews. Last March, Cannon used Dustin Hoffman's name without authorization in an ad for the movie of Elmore Leonard's *La Brava*; and Hoffman, though he had signed, reneged. Perhaps Richard Benjamin is available.

It was thus not inconceivable that Cannon's *King Lear* might have ended up being directed by some other French director—Claude Chabrol, say, or Claude Lelouch—written by and starring John Irving or, perhaps, Jimmy Breslin.

Lear involves an unlikely package of egos. The project pits Golan and Globus (two foreign materialists shopping for cachet) against Godard (French, non-linear, experimentalist, Marxist) against Mailer (New York, literati, glitterati, solidly bourgeois). Associate producer Tom Luddy says *Lear* will be a film about "power and virtue, having as much relation to Shakespeare as Godard's last film, *Hail Mary*, did to the gospel." Mailer, whose major acting experience was getting shot in the head in *Ragtime*, will portray a "slightly fictionalized version of himself," opposite his daughter Kate. Other Mailer offspring may pop in and out too. Indeed, at press time, no one outside the Mailer family was definitely committed to appear in *King Lear*.

Only some chunks of Mailer's *Lear* script will actually be filmed. "Which parts are anyone's guess," says Luddy. In return for his cooperation on *Lear*, Cannon is giving Mailer a \$4.5-million budget to write and direct the movie of his book *Tough Guys Don't Dance*, to star Ryan O'Neal and scheduled to begin shooting right after *Lear*.

Luddy says *Lear* is budgeted at under \$1 million; Golan says \$2 million. (Small wonder the SEC has made an inquiry into how Cannon accounts for its film costs and revenues.) Will *King Lear* be another self-indulgent Mailer home movie? Whatever it is, Cannon should be satisfied. Though Golan admits that this vanity film is bound to have "limited appeal," it's only costing a million (or two) dollars—a sum that Golan-Globus will recoup in a day (or two) from the box-office receipts of *Over the Top*, their next Sylvester Stallone vehicle.—*Richard Natale*

MOVIES

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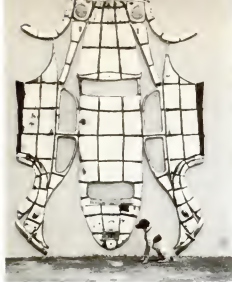
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TAXI TAXIDERMIST

DUSTIN SHULER'S ART IS "SKINNING" cars with a blowtorch and then displaying the flattened bodies as "pelts." Before he did that, he nailed a 1959 four-door Cadillac to the ground with a 20-foot common nail he made out of steel. The nail was dropped from the top of a fully extended construction crane and went through the roof of the car and three feet into the ground. Shuler then pinned an airplane to the side of a building with the nail, an idea he got from collecting butterflies. Dustin Shuler is 38 and lives in California.

A R T "PRIMARILY, I'M A HUNTER. I go after certain cars that I like, as a hunter will go after a particular game animal, like a lion or bird. Cars in general are, to me, a species. Not anything will do. So far, I have a 1963 VW Beetle, a Fiat Spider, a Porsche 356C, a pickup truck, a Triumph GT6 and an LAPD black-and-white police car. Basically, I'm after classics—cars that look good. On my list of cars to get is a 1964½ Mustang fastback, a 1957 Chevy, a Datsun 240Z, a Corvette, an Alfa Romeo, a gull wing Mercedes and a vintage New York City Checker, which are getting rare. A DeLorean would be good, but I'd have to approach it differently, because you can't cut stainless steel with a torch. The problem with old American cars, like the Imperial and the Plymouth with the big fins, is that they're so

big and heavy. You can only have so many elephants, and the Imperial, that's an elephant.

"I look for game that's indigenous to an area. A good place to hunt these cars is here in L.A., where they're plentiful, but when I decided I wanted to do a pickup truck, I went to Texas, where the Ford pickup is the number one vehicle.

"Generally, I don't care if the car runs or not. If I'm going to cut it right away, I prefer that it have no engine or transmission, so that they're not in my way. The police car I got, however, was in great shape and running. If it is running, I just junk the interior garbage. I do like to keep a nice set of seats for myself, just to sit around the studio on. The door-knobs I keep on, because they're part of the exterior. The chrome, mirrors, grille, bumpers also stay on. Everything but the glass, which I replace with Plexiglas.

"I've had a lot of people offer me their cars to cut up, but unless it's a car I love, I won't do it. So far I've sold my pelts to the state of California and to the city of San Francisco. They're not out of reach of collectors, but they do need a fair amount of wall space, with the exception of the very small sports cars.

"If my car gives me trouble, I take it in and say how much, and if it's too much, well, I'll just cut it and hang it up on the wall, and I won't get any more trouble out of that car.

"The first car I did was the VW, which was funded by the San Diego Natural History Museum. I showed it there with two endangered species, a mountain lion and a timber wolf, which the museum supplied.

"What I do first when I get a car is I look at it for a while and decide where I'm going to cut, even if I do a model first. Then I'll mark the cuts on the car, just like a butcher will in those diagrams of beef. I'll start with the hood, front fenders, roof, doors. Then I'll strip away the equivalent of the fat that you have on an animal, so I'm left with just the outer layer of metal. Then I put it back together. Cutting it up is a lot quicker than putting it back. The whole job could take anywhere from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, depending. I rarely work on them continuously, unless I'm working as an artist in residence somewhere.

"I skinned a lot of animals before I skinned a car, so it was easy to make the jump. I love my pet birds, and when they die I don't just dump them in the garbage—if they die when they're still good-looking. I have a dog, a beautiful German shorthaired pointer, and whenever I leave him at a kennel, I tell them that if he dies, keep the body, because I'll skin him."—Scott Cohen

SPALDING GRAY AMONG POWER BROKERS AT

PALIO

SPALDING GRAY IS NOT REALLY AT home in fancy restaurants. "Not long ago I was taken out by an editor on an expense account. Renée, my girlfriend, reaches into her casserole and the first thing she comes across is a used Band-Aid, fresh off a guy's finger!" Another time, in Paris, a Hawaiianized Spalding got tangled in the tablecloth and swept a torrent of bouillabaisse onto the floor.

EATING We met at the bar in Palio, an elaborate new Italian restaurant on West 51st Street. A gigantic, red Sandro Chia mural of the Palio horse race is wrapped imposingly around the upper half of the walls. The Palio festival in Siena, centering on a dangerously frantic horse race that dates back to the Middle Ages, appealed to Spalding's sense of adventure.

I had expected to encounter some nominal carryover exuberance around the enormous horseshoe bar at Palio, the restaurant: corporate lawyers jostling stockbrokers, executive vice presidents trampling secretaries and systems analysts in the race for drinks. But people on this fast track apparently don't even drink white wine spritzers anymore. The bar was ominously empty and silent except for piped-in music—easy-listening classical.

Spalding had arrived looking a little crumpled. He had traded in his usual jeans and plaid shirt for a light suit with a loud, hand-painted tie. He had been up late the night before watching himself on *Letterman* ("I felt like an oddball intellectual weirdo"), and he was exhausted after six months of talking for a living, most recently at the Mitzi Newhouse. He ordered a Bloody Mary and gave the room a cautious survey. Taking in the polished brown marble pillars, the huge bronze railings, the flags at the entrance—a style of high-flown patriotism Mussolini favored for railway stations—Spalding declared it all very "calming."

To get to the dining room, you have to be



officially cleared by the factotum at the front, who then puts you in an elevator to the second floor. I had booked a table under the name Maxine Gorky. As the doors of the elevator closed the Palio man gave a conspiratorial nod and said, "Enjoy your lunch, Miss Hodgson."

At the top, we were greeted by a grinning delegation in black tie. "Your table is ready, Miss Gorky."

Spalding looked confused.

When the captain arrived with the wine list, Spalding wanted something white.

"Orvieto," suggested the captain.

Spalding, who has had a lot of therapy, was feeling a little confrontational. "Why do you say that one's good?"

"I know the wine, I drink it."

"Why do you drink that as opposed to some other?"

"Because it's very good."

"And you've tried them all?"

"Yes."

"Are you the wine steward?"

"No, I'm the captain."

"What's the captain do?"

"I take care of *everything*."

The place was packed. Half the clientele were women dressed in those girls' business suits that are worn with power bows and Reeboks. The other half were gray-haired, gray-suited corporate men. Spalding's giddy tie and my straw hat were undoubtedly interpreted as "statements." Surrounded by all this expensive gray, black and beige, it's impossible to forget that you are sitting in a \$140-million, 54-story insurance building. Physical blandness has seldom been wrought so expensively. The tables are too far apart to permit eavesdropping; besides the piped-in semiclassical, there's only the hum of meetings about money.

Spalding was indignant to find that the daily special was goulash.

"I thought this was an *Italian* restaurant," he said.

"I recommend the veal chop," said the captain, who was sounding less Italian and more French every minute.

"Veal..." murmured Spalding, pondering the menu. "I like veal. But...I hate to eat a baby."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the captain. "Not baby! It's *beef* portion!"

Our places were laid with enormous brass plates, like gold records, with various Palio colors painted on ceramic in the center. The busboy took the plates away.

"Hey! Excuse me!" Spalding called out. "Why did you do that?"

The busboy looked puzzled. "Don't you

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want to eat?"

He brought them back. In due course, the gold records were removed again and replaced with pasta that echoed a Chia painting, green squares of seafood-stuffed ravioli aswirl in an orange pepper sauce.

We talked about Spalding's projects, which include a grant to hang out in the streets of L.A. listening to talkers, and writing a book about guilt and neurosis.

"So many of my monologues have been about that, about not being able to enjoy myself," he said. Spalding finished his pasta, went on to his veal chop, which was a little dry, and ordered a green salad and more bread. "I feel that I am divided into two parts. I have always been afraid that the killer part of me would jump out of the window while the life part of me was asleep."

The captain refilled our wineglasses. For dessert, Spalding wanted *Bel Paese*, which was obviously against the rules. Instead, he got tiny portions of nine Italian cheeses.

The last to finish lunch, we looked around for a staircase. A flustered waiter caught us in the act; the only stairs were the emergency exit, he explained, back through the kitchen. He sternly directed us to the elevator, and we left the restaurant.—*Moirá Hodgson*

MISSING

MOMMIES

by Paul Rudnick

HERE'S A CALLOUS OBSERVATION: they're dropping like flies. If you've perused any recent fiction, you've noticed—a mother's death has become a mainstay. The anonymous hero of *Bright Lights*, *Big City* plunges wantonly into Manhattan nightlife, staving painful memories of his anonymous mother's passing. Susan Minot's *Monkeys*, Lisa Grunwald's *Summer*, many of the stories in Lorrie Moore's *Self-Help* and David Levitt's *Family Dancing*—all culminate, through illness or accident, in the demise of a mother. Tragic events, certainly—a universal sorrow; I'm tempted to exempt Christina Crawford, just to lighten the topic.

Younger authors have not known war, once a common, even handy, springboard for first fiction. *The Naked and the Dead*, *The Sun Also Rises*, these are late shows now, not best-sellers. Another generation glorious-



ly annihilated Mom, the castrating, selfless Manson-in-an-apron of Roth and Albee. The WASPish contingent continues to peck at Mother, in her cashmere twinsets and tennis tan, à la the hazy matriarchs of Cheever and Updike and A. R. Gurney Jr. But today's fictioneers, the bookboomers, have laid claim to *Mommy*.

Mommies are not forbidding, warping titans, bilious with maternal imperatives; Mommies watched TV with us, and had jobs, if not careers, and sometimes wore blue jeans. My Mommy introduced me to Yodels, the choco-dipped treats that come two to a pack, or, far better, ten to a Yodels Treasure Chest. I put them in the Stop & Shop cart, and we ate them in the Chevy wagon on the way home. Mommies are a suburban phenomenon; when one writes of them, brand names bloom. Mommies connote Dr. Spock and patios and PTA's, women set down in a family paradise and assigned GE kitchens, cleaning ladies and Kool-Aid. Suburbs are designed for the serene nurture of children, distant from alleys and ethnics and anything very interesting. Small wonder that mothers and children grew extremely close, plopped together on the pastel outskirts of civilization.

Mommy fiction has loving, suburban roots; in *Monkeys*, Mrs. Vincent ice-skates with her brood and plays linen-closet hide-and-seek. David Levitt writes of Mothers Of Lesbians And Gays chatting by the built-in pool; Jay McInerney's boy discusses sex with his mother—in Bucks County, no less.

Previous generations knew the upheavals of Hitler, the immigrant experience, the kindling of a nuclear age; all this is a Time-Life gift set for today's relatively pampered bratlets. Things have been going well lately, at least in the honor society of munchkins given to good schools and good publishers. Allowances are lush, the draft board spins ads

on MTV, the youthquake has become a mall event. Parental divorce can be the trauma of choice, leading, in *Less Than Zero*, to drug abuse, alienation in preschoolers and rampant Ray-Bans. But the death of a parent is the primal shock, the first horror, the scabrous awakening. Dads are still distant, or sinning with younger, second wives. The death of a Mommy has become the central despair of lives that often remain childlike—fearful and greedy—far beyond college.

Most of the works mentioned conclude with the mother's death. There are intimations of a new maturity, a sober awareness following loss. But so far, no one in recent literature has grown up or broken through, and the books become miniatures, capsule portraits, single emotions explored exhaustingly. Not to reproach: these works are often well written and blessedly honest. It makes sense that a generation infantilized as baby boomers would cling to their Mommies, to a tribe of women who sat on the floor and munched Jiffy Pop and hated laundry; even early latchkey kids were rewarded with pudding pops and ten-speeds for allowing their Mommies to work.

The danger of Mommy fiction lies in an insularity, an examination of privileged lives without irony. Novels should be more than extended Hers columns or earnest life-style reports. Yupster books are irresistible, like Sharper Image catalogs, but there's an element of embarrassment; angst among the Cuisinarts seems unearned, willful. The death of a parent may be the only true rift in these lives, the sole respite from success. Perhaps later works will move beyond the scope of college and co-op, or will interpret those worlds with a tad more wit. Yuppies make better targets than heroes; their suffering is ripe for comedy, not keening. Yup authors may be frightened of their own leisure, the ease of their achievements; they may seek tragedy as a badge of humanity, as a credential, entree into the big leagues of Quality Lit.

When Mother died, people whispered and the children were very quiet, in their Sunday best. When Mom died, our parents raced for the shrink, in hair shirts. When a Mommy dies, the betrayal is enormous, and kids turn to cocaine, or Rum Raisin, or TV, to Mrs. Huxtable and Kate and Allie and the Golden Girls, to the network Mommies, reboundant after a spasm of jiggle and Magnum. Valerie Harper, once Rhoda Morgenstern, the ultimate hopeless single, is now Valerie Hogan, with three boys and a husband who's away. And we turn to reruns of Lucy, the mommy of us all. Isn't Little Ricky at Random House? ☹

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MY KID

COULD
DO THAT

by Ellis Weiner

CONSISTENT WITH OUR POLICY OF providing quality child care—for our child, if no one else—my wife and I decided to take Nathaniel Weiner, age nine months, to an exhibit in SoHo entitled “Damaged Goods,” a collection of paintings and sculptures purportedly dealing with “Desire and the Object.” At the time I did not have the slightest idea what this theme meant, as indeed I still don’t. But I was keenly interested in the show, mainly in the possibilities it offered as a context for the instruction of certain values and principles I wished to impress upon the baby, as part of the ongoing process of his education, of which I am a principal architect.

I have made it my project to teach him How to Be a Grown-up.

We wandered through once-colorful, once-bohemian SoHo, past expensive cafés, jewelry stores, shops selling shapeless clothing made of sailcloth for hundreds if not millions of dollars, amid tourists from the boroughs and the ‘burbs. I played my first card skillfully.

“See this, Nat?” I said. “Isn’t this fun? Someday, when you’re a grown-up, you can make a lot of money, too. Then you can move from your old neighborhood to an artists’ neighborhood, where it’s interesting and fun. That’ll chase the artists away to a new and scary neighborhood. Then you can take a trip from your new neighborhood and have a good scary time visiting them in their new neighborhood. Soon your grown-up friends will want to live there, too, and the artists will have to move to an even scarier neighborhood. You and your grown-up friends can keep doing this, chasing the artists from neighborhood to neighborhood, until grown-ups live everywhere and the artists fall off the end of the earth. Then—you win!”

The youth’s expression, tellingly punctuated by the insertion into his mouth of his left thumb, asked clearly: what’s so grown-up about that? To which I answered, “Anything involving real estate is grown-up. Get that

through your soft spot.”

At the New Museum of Contemporary Art we paid our adult admission fees and strolled the child down a passageway lined with more than a dozen pedestals. From each projected a white plaster arm and hand, extended in maître d’-like welcome; atop each pedestal sat a golden-yellow Jell-O mold upon a glass cake dish.

“*Bth-bth-bth bahl!*” Nat said.

“It’s art,” I replied. I went on to explain how some people thought it a worthwhile activity to make things with no other use than their embodiment of beauty or symbolic meaning, things they thought important, or interesting, or compelling, regardless of their creations’ monetary value—art.

“Eh! Eh!”

“I’m not kidding,” I said. Most of these artists, I explained, are little more than children. It is all well and good for *real* children to play with objects, and put plaster all over their hands, and mess around with lemon Jell-O and cake dishes, and never give a moment’s thought to the requirements of a large corporation desperate for a big, handsome, well-behaved installation in its lobby. But people past adolescence have certain responsibilities to the economy. Artists, like children, I stated, were not grown-ups.

“Where would society be,” I continued, perhaps somewhat pedantically, “if everyone behaved like that? Who would make pieces suitable for America’s great corporate waiting areas? Who would serve as subjects for fawning profiles in *Connoisseur* and *Vanity Fair*?”

“Mmm-aaah!”

“You may not care, young man, but I assure you, a great many advertising agencies handling the print campaigns of perfume, gourmet chocolate and Swiss watch companies care very deeply.”

We entered the exhibit. One piece, which elicited my outright laughter, consisted of a modular sofa in which the customary open space through which one would enter the three-sided conversation pit had been plugged up by a fourth section of sofa; the result was an entirely closed system, four sides of all sofa, with no possibility of human use. It was offensive—children in Africa were forced to sit on the ground, and here was a fine piece of home furnishing going to waste.

“See, Nathaniel?” I said. “Without the discipline of market forces, people go too far. Look at this: is it art, or inventory day at Levitz? And another thing . . .” I wheeled him over to a large Plexiglas cube enclosing an industrial vacuum cleaner. “What’s the deal here? I swear, these people—they do whatever

they want and call it art, and we’re supposed to . . . get an experience from it. At least Julian Schnabel uses broken cups and moose antlers that nobody needs anymore.”

“*Dthh-dth-dth,*” Nat said, adding, “*M’wuuuh.*”

Schnabel, I explained, was successful, and success is widely regarded as a key measure of grown-upness. Had Nat, in all his weeks, ever heard anyone challenge the grown-up credentials of Ivan Boesky, Liz Claiborne, Steve Rubell or Supermodel Paulina Porizkova?

I could not impress upon the child too strongly that the first step in becoming a grown-up involved learning to view the world as a marketplace and striving for mastery thereof. It was the grown-ups’ duty, pleasure and passion to transform himself from a nice little boy into a “go-for-it guy,” and then whip himself into a genteel frenzy of self-salesmanship.

That was why we lived in—well, anyway, near—Manhattan: New York was the Marketplace. Everyone (with the exception of a few jokers who put sofas and vacuum cleaners in galleries and called it art) was a grown-up. Everyone has been transformed into a go-for-it guy. Here more grown-ups have whipped themselves into more genteel frenzies of self-salesmanship per capita than in any other city in the nation.

Nat balled his hands together, pumped them against his wide-open mouth and said, “*Bah-bah-bah-b’wuuuh!*”

“Well,” I chided, “if you’re saying that to the extent New York is the Marketplace, it is only hospitable to institutions or individuals with a lot of money, isn’t that more than just a little facile? There are many civilized activities available to New Yorkers for a nominal fee. Look at Shakespeare in the Park!”

The baby kicked his feet. I couldn’t let that pass without comment.

“Now I suppose you’re thinking that if Shakespeare were alive today, he’d have to *live* in the park. Youthful sarcasm is no substitute for reasoned analysis.”

“Eh?”

“Because,” I said, perhaps a bit testily, “we can’t afford Manhattan. Besides, I never said that I, myself, was a grown-up. I feel like I’m pulling a fast one whenever I use a credit card. Don’t do as I do, do as I say.”

“*Bith —BAH BAH BAH . . .*”

Call me a doting father, but I think I’m beginning to reach the boy. ☺

“I would not like to say anything mean about Mr. Trump,”—spokesman for architect Helmut Jahn when asked by SPY about Jahn’s dismissal from the Television City project



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MORTIMER'S: WATERING

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WHEN GLENN BERENBAUM, THE Philadelphia-born millionaire, first opened Mortimer's a decade ago, I predicted that it would go through a trendy phase and then sink without a trace among the Irish bars that lined the rank avenues east of Park. How wrong I was. Mortimer's has never been more popular with New York's *soi-disant*, and I would guess that as long as there are socialites and social climbers, Mortimer's will remain their principal base camp.

But why Mortimer's? It's not the look of the place. And it certainly isn't the food. What sustains the phenomenon?

It is hard to imagine Mortimer's being what it is without Glenn Berenbaum at the tiller, or, better yet, the till. Like Sirio at Le Cirque and Steve Rubell at Palladium, Glenn *is* Mortimer's, and vice versa. He lends his careful manners and wide circle of friends to the place, but he also lends his weaknesses. Glenn has Hawaiian tendencies; he can often be found drinking with his chums late into the night. He is also a gossip, a prerequisite when running a place that caters to a crowd bitchier than any this side of the 92nd Street ASCPA—people such as Jerry Zipkin, Kenny Lane, Nan Kempner, Lally Weymouth, Mica Ertegun, John Richardson, Fernanda Niven, Pat Buckley and the most famous Spaniard since Queen Isabella, Diego del Vayo.

When Glenn decided to open Mortimer's, he bought the building and moved in over the shop, a sort of seventies Rick—as much the master of his place as Bogie ever was. And the place caught on immediately. Glenn's close friend Bill Blass saw to that. The word concerning chic spreads pathologically fast in the world of fashion, almost as quickly as bad news. In no time, clotheshorses such as Mercedes Kellogg, Anne Slater, Chessy Rayner, Nancy Reagan and their Ganymedes had be-

come as ubiquitous as the carpaccio. (Incidentally, the word *catamite* is derived from a Latin corruption of Ganymede, the beautiful Greek boy with whom Zeus fell in love, and is defined succinctly as a boy kept for sexual pleasure. Ganymede was also the cupbearer of the gods, and in the case of the Mortimer's crowd, a walker.)

Once the Nans and their Gans made Mortimer's their meeting place, the rest of New York's instant café society followed inexorably. Even the Old Guard came. Jackie Onassis was often there having lunch with Reinaldo and Carolina Herrera, while her little sister, Lee Radziwill, preferred dinner by candlelight with various overachievers.

From the start, Glenn had the good sense to hire a number of broken-down upper-class Englishmen as captains. A great portion of the Mortimer's crowd has always affected English mannerisms, and it was nice to have the Honourable Anthony Russell, son of Lord Amptill, show one to a table and brush away the crumbs after the meal. In fact, Mortimer's became the club away from club for hordes of transplanted old and young fogies and snotty Sloane Rangers. John Bowes-Lyon, cousin of the queen, was and is the quintessential Mortimer's Englishman.

But there is more to Mortimer's than a genial, live-in owner and an accomplished staff. There is a just slightly raffish atmosphere about the place, a feeling that anything can happen at any moment. For example, during a one-night visit to New York a few months ago, I happened to be passing by on my way home at about three in the morning. I looked inside, hoping that Glenn was up. He was, along with a Mexican mariachi band and 60 friends of Whitney Tower Jr., who was giving a private party. There, in the center of the room, doing a mock striptease on a tabletop, was Charlotte Hambro, the granddaughter of Winston Churchill.

My best bit of repartee also took place at Mort's. Reinaldo and Carolina Herrera were giving a dinner for Princess Margaret; I was at the next table, dining with Glenn. Reinaldo asked me over and introduced me to the squat princess. I was well in my cups. "We met in sixty-seven in Shardinia," I said. "What?" asked Margaret, betraying her own Hawaiian tendencies. "You're a shivil shervant." I retreated, furious that anyone could mistake me for a civil servant. When Margaret got up to leave, the house piano player struck up a few bars of "God Save the Queen." "No, no, none of that," Margaret protested. I couldn't resist, and I yelled to her, "It's not for you, ma'am; it's for Jerry Zipkin." —*Taki*

FREE THE TAMA JANOWITZ SLAVES


For dinner that night I made cheese fondue. I had a terrible craving for the stuff, had for two days. It came in one of those packages, Swiss Knight, \$3.50 at the supermarket.

SURELY THERE IS NO MISTAKING this authoritative new voice in our midst. It is Tama, Tama Janowitz, "fearless writer" and "female Jay McInerney" (*New York* magazine), whose tales of life downtown, collected as *Slaves of New York*, have been published and reported on and reviewed ever so widely. She is the star of the first literary video, which, if her publisher's publicist is to be believed, could "do for writing what MTV has done for music." Ever since the cover story in *New York* magazine, heralding her as "the most talked about writer of the year," she has been talked about incessantly in the remotest bazaars and byways of the English-speaking world. Last month she left the city for Princeton, no less, where she will be the Alfred Hodder Fellow in the Humanities.

Let us say the name just one more time: Taaama, Tama Janowitz. Conjure with it a little. There's a frowsty-haired kookiness, a certain zany specificity about it. The very sounds evoke a detailed image, as does her writing, of the uptowner's idea of the quintessential downtown gal, a sort of rubberized, all-weather Lower East Side Tama Doll with matching plastic-pink dress, trashy earrings and "downtown" hairdo.

Tama Janowitz has very little to do with literature, and everything to do with television. Her own video aside, Tama Janowitz's writing—ephemeral, external, instantly forgettable—reads like a transcribed night's worth of rock videos. In the world of the plotless image, the momentary pose is king.

What, then, is she doing in *The New Yorker*? With a relentless decline in the magazine's fortunes and its takeover by S. I. Newhouse, poor old sainted William Shawn has obviously been prevailed upon to cast about blindly for young writers with an exciting new image. In his review of *Slaves of New York*



in *The Wall Street Journal*, Raymond Sokolov even goes so far as to say, "At age 80 [Shawn] has become a laughingstock . . . indulging an old man's whim for young women writers of dubious (literary) virtue." He adds that without the "still-potent imprimatur of *The New Yorker*, [Janowitz] would never have attained such high visibility." But high visibility is exactly what Tama had attained *before* they published her. They didn't create her, she created herself—and they believed it.

Tama Janowitz's ascension in its essence reflects the downtown phenomenon as a whole. The East Village scene was born some four years ago at an opening given by gallery owner Gracie Mansion. In those days, the gallery was a fourth-floor tenement bathroom. Scores of people packed the railroad apartment, colorful characters with peculiarly evocative names and an air of self-conscious bohemian history in the making. Aside from Gracie Mansion, there was Sur Rodney Sur, Mike Bidlo, Buster Cleveland and T. Greathouse, the photographer who was exhibiting in the tiny bathroom.

Once again, the name sounds are important, for what is self-stereotyping (in the context, for instance, of ethnic minorities) but a kind of fey name-calling? These people were downtown Uncle Toms posturing in the manner required of them; Navaho Indians disporting their full regalia for white tourists visiting the reservation, in order to sell a few baubles. The art was a sideshow; the real art on display was the milieu itself.

And so it is with Tama Janowitz. Baudelaire wrote, "The dandy lives in the mirror of himself." One gets the impression that she keeps a mirror welded to her typewriter before which she rehearses noisily, fluffing up her hair, working herself up to write the endless, interchangeable autodialogues of her stories. It is of herself that she writes, pretending to be the same person that every other downtowner hawking art or jewelry or writing must pretend to be these days: an ironic, exotic East Village humanoid. Which doesn't stop her from racing uptown when business beckons for power lunches at the Russian Tea Room, where she recently dined with two William Morris agents at one of the restaurant's more privileged right-wall booths.

Alas, for the reader, Tama's writing won't be the same if that image of the downtown ingenue gets tarnished. Left to itself, Tama's prose points at something else, someone off the page, to give it context and meaning. But if the writing is nothing without Tama and downtown on our minds, how did she get there to begin with? —Melik Kaylan

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Party Poop



AMATEUR NIGHT:

"They'll be gaga at the go-go when they see me in my toga," sang Michael Musto, the downtown gossipist, at The Saint's production of *Hair*.



WRAPPED: far "La Mode en Liberté" at Lincoln Center, Tino Turner (below left) turned up with and in Azedine Alaïa—trussed up in one of the tiny designer's tiny designs, she resembled a black Michelin woman on a diet. Perhaps Christa (top) could have swaddled her more becomingly, or, at least, more loosely; Mrs. Mitzi Newhouse and her hangers-on (left) came dressed as a marionette theater: her date was a Grant Tinker impersonator, and Mrs. Schlöng (standing) looked just like, well, Mrs. Schlöng.

As

a great New York lady put it, people who need people are the luckiest people in the world. As another great New York lady put it, life is a cabaret, old chum. Also: no man is an island. All of which, in addition to tiny apartments and the pathological need to schmooze, is why New Yorkers spend more of their lives dressed up, in public, with liquor, than any people on earth. The recent round, pictured below, had a decidedly River Oaks air—a splashy Texas bar and grill, a de Menil bash, a well-fed post-deb with a twang. See for yourself.



BA
HUMBUG!



HALLOWEEN REMEARS-

al: grizzled disc jockey Anita Sarko (right) congratulated Fred Gwynne (Harvard '51) on his adorable groffito (above), at the opening of the very American Cadillac Bar; had Diana Vreeland actu-



they're ugly."—Denise Hale, socialite, to Chessa Rayner, socialite.



ally attended the unveiling of her new jewelry collection at the Mayfair Regent Hotel, she would have turned more than usually oshen upon seeing the dumpling-faced Texan (top left) who modeled the D.V. baubles.

SUNBURN: at Ad-elaide de Menil's, Cori Bernstein (left) performs a trick.

VERY LATE NIGHT:

television curiosities Joe Franklin (below, at Nirvano Club One) and Lorry "Bud" Melmon (right, with pals at his birthday party at the Key Cafe) go where they're told.



BOY TOYS: professional geek Anthony Michael Hall (above right) put down his ghetto-blasters to spend a poignant moment with a friend at the party for his super smash hit movie, *Out of Bounds*; professional actors Neill Borry and

Zach Galligan (above left) say, "We oppose the use of drugs," in sign language; at Palladium's celebration of Nureyev's escape from the Soviet Union, one of the club's backers, Stephen Greenberg (below), fancied Ursula Andress.

"I won't have salt and pepper shakers on the table—"





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ACROSS

1. Such a schmuck might take an inordinate number of putts per hole. But the spy reader does not need to be beaten over the head, so I won't explain everything else this thoroughly, if at all.
3. Big plus art; *bogart*, the verb.
8. G is short for 1,000 (many). A roan is a horse.
9. The British would not traffic in Mexican-accented phonemes, as here. (By the same token, have you ever had a decent burrito in Shropshire?) *Stein* is the second half of *Springsteen*, *kin* is folks, and "We don't need no steenkin' bodes" is what the bandit chieftain, who claims to be a *federale*, says when Bogart (vis-à-vis 3) asks him for ID in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.
12. To means "thanks" in English. Over here, with dots after each letter, it stands for "teaching assistant."
13. An around-the-world is a basic yo-yo trick that requires that the yo-yo "sleep," or spin in place, at the bottom of its drop. Oy and oy proceed backward from *z*, which stands for *South*.
16. Burt Reynolds movie, *WW* and the *Disco Dancings*. As a concerned individual, the author of this crossword does not welcome *WW III* or *WW* and the *Disco Dancings III*.
17. *Spez* minus one *z*, which is a point on the compass. Sly Stallone and Dolly Parton are both big in the east.
19. The British wouldn't stoop to an abbreviation, but they have been making up these puzzles for decades, and anyway who's to say they know what they're doing? Ms. R.I. (broken *rim*) would presumably not tower over Mr. Alaska.
21. The T is a football formation.
25. In baseball, the junior circuit is the American League, in existence fewer years than the National. *He* is enough to tell you that the answer is a male name.
26. A mote is a bit; L means 50.
27. P means piano means soft; *si* is A-I backward (regres-

sively). As to whether the clue as a whole is a comment on Pia Zadora, this puzzle will not be pinned down.

28. *Echo* without *ho*. EC Comics included *Tales From the Crypt*.

29. Autry's horse. A *champ* is on top. And coming from the other direction is *no. 1*.

32. Words like *loose*, *wild* and *crazy* may signal that the letters in the word they modify are to be reshuffled (see "broken rims," above). In this case one tip (the letter *r*) is dropped from *anchor* first.

34. This is my favorite. "Do we hear?" *do*.

35. Enos "Country" Slaughter is in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

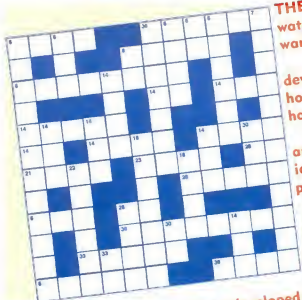
DOWN

1. I have always wished that a word like this would pop up in a crossword puzzle. Now I'm satisfied. (A honeydew man is one whose wife is always saying, "Honey do this, honey do that.")
2. *Th*'s involvement consists in its coming between *arran* and *ey*. Some fun, huh? But we need these nuts and bolts.
4. She's always popping up in straight domestic crosswords, and now I see why. There aren't many women whose names begin with *oo*. Not that there should be.
6. I take quiet pride in this one. Could've done it in two words, but this way there's more flavor.
7. A twin killing is a double play is taking two. Baseball. You got *twin*king, right?
8. Hate to resort to initials, but I didn't know what the hell else to do. Keillor and Chesterton. Wohegon. Father Brown. What more do you want from me?
10. No Southeast. Get it? In Thurber's story, a sloshed Grant surrenders to Lee.
14. A power without his PR.
18. *Ap* is almost *apt*. The weak link in this clue. But you could figure it out once you got *doonep*, couldn't you? You got *doonep*, didn't you?
19. This one is overelaborate, but what the heck. What animals are the apples of bulls' eyes? And a goose egg is a what?
22. I find this anagram fascinating, a message from the god of language. *Mess* serves double duty here, as synonym and as anagram tip-off.
31. I must say I am willing to accept plaudits for this one. An ion is a charged particle, right? Get out of here.

And let me say in closing that I welcome feedback on this. As the actress said to the archbishop.—R.B.



ANSWERS TO THE UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD



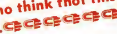
THE WAY SOME AMERICANS NEED TO watch *The Young and the Restless*, I need to work the preposterously cryptic crosswords

developed in the *London Times*. I do not need, however, to be stumped by towns in Sussex, horticultural terms peculiar to the Twittoge

and cricket references. In recent years, various publications in this country have been printing crosswords of the British type in the

American idiom, sort of. But I want an American puzzle that says, "In your face, Britannio! Never listened to the Five Sotins, did you, Mrs.

Thatcher? And what does a developed country need with princes and princesses?" So here it is. Next month's Un-British Crossword will eschew certain minor procedural liberties, as regards abbreviations and dialect, taken here because I got bocked into a

couple of corners. This puzzle, like "The Wostelond," can never be wholly explicited, but its salutation appears on page 61, along with notes for readers who think that this effort, like "The Wostelond," is a laud of Angla-American rubbish. 

THE UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD PUZZLE BY ROY BLOUNT JR.

ACROSS

1. He would take five of them, say, per cup (4).
3. Mud daubing? Not around this joint (6).
8. Many a steed's response to president's joke (5).
9. Folks of Bruce's latter half need no such badges vis-à-vis 3 (8).
11. Over here, no gratitude for one who marks paper (with dots) (2).
12. Wolfman went both ways in Cambodia (3,3).
13. Laments returning from Dixie go round the world if they sleep (5).
16. He and the Dixie Dancekings—no III, we hope (1,1).
17. Sly dolly's chest treasure: glasses off a point (4).
19. With bent rims, she can't look down on Mr. AK (2,2).
21. Emperor of boobs needs formation for uplift (4).
23. One hole greets another here (4).
25. He hits junior circuit's high points (2).
26. Just a bit before 50 in a low-rent rendezvous (5).
27. She's soft, but first-rate? Regressively (3).
28. Repeat without mirth a house of comics (2).
29. Old Gene's mount is on top both ways (8).
32. Loose anchor with tip off. Dandy! (5).
34. In the still of the night, do we hear an Italian offensive? (6).
35. Wild one's proper for rural butchery (4).

DOWN

7. In scant moments there go I at 50 taking two more than once (4,8).
8. U.S. Lake author initially begat U.K. shamus priest (1,1).
10. What inka-dinka Jimmy had and Unca Sam would have if Grant had been drinking at Appomattox (4).
14. Stripped of image high and low, potentate to be short (3).
15. Choose a halo over JFK command (3).
18. "England's Team" player? Almost fitting under sofa, one hears (7).
19. Chant climbing on gosling's source yields what bull's eye's apples do (3).
20. Let a corny affair come up, and she's there (3).
22. Mess of CIA's arranging (6).
24. "In Miami? Not I," unhappily declares holy hard-ass (4).
28. Not a choice, but part of the choice. Come again? (4).
30. Comes before 'ooligan? 'Is rear end (2).
31. Take bite out of 29 and get bit, charged (3).
33. *Ooff* To be in debt endlessly (2).

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Or a taste.

For FROZFRUIT gets its great taste from chunks of real fruit; chunks of pineapple, hunks of strawberry, shreds of coconut, whole cherries, bananas so ripe they taste like they just came off the boat, watermelon so real it comes with seeds.

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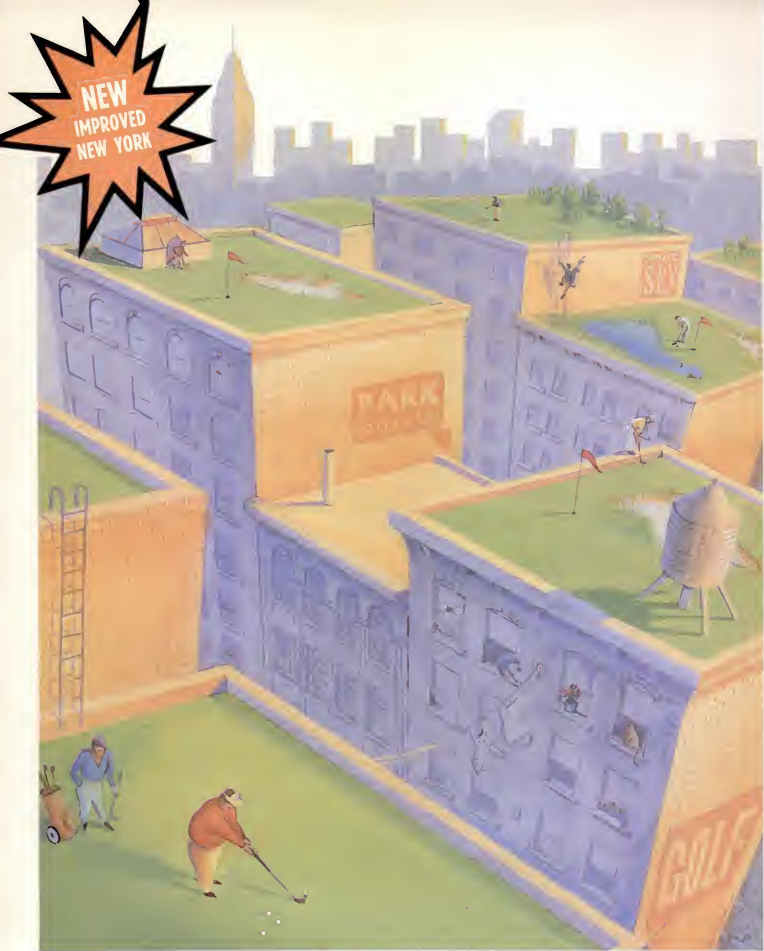
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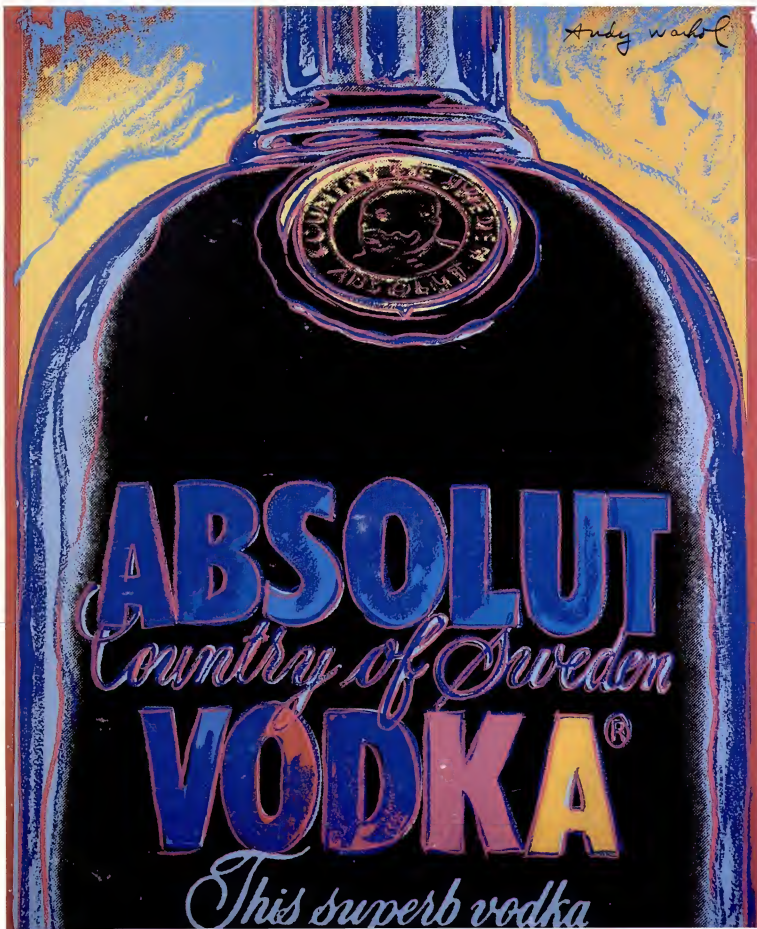


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Andy Warhol



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